

have significant progress on this critical issue with this new majority in this people's House. Chairman FRANK and Chairwoman WATERS have been true leaders on this issue, and I would like to recognize their efforts.

Today, we also gather to recall a past leader, who 20 years ago brought about a major increment of progress. I speak, of course, of Stewart B. McKinney and Bruce Vento, and the law that bears their name.

There are really very few, extremely few, cases of an elected official committing themselves to accompaniment of those in need the way Congressman MCKINNEY did. Indeed, the late Congressman lost his life as a result of his commitment. And while we commemorate his work and recall the circumstances of his passing, we should not lose sight of the many thousands who died in a similar way, and those who are still on the streets today, and at risk.

Many Americans have passed out of this world in lonely alleys, on top of grates, isolated from friends and family, and then been buried in unmarked plots. Indeed, as noted in the resolution commemorating McKinney-Vento, the condition of homelessness on average causes the loss of 30 years in life expectancy.

The McKinney-Vento programs have been critical in addressing this great American tragedy, and it is worth reflecting on this progress and recognizing this achievement of dedicated leadership. Across the board, McKinney-Vento has addressed the core issue of housing and deeply intertwined issues of health care access, education, job training, and reaching out to homeless youth and getting them back in school, this law has made a difference.

This is an important precedent to keep in mind as we move forward with a new agenda. After all, this was an emergency response, and while necessary and just, it was not claimed that this would put an end to homelessness, and certainly the Federal response to homelessness should not be limited to these programs.

So I look forward to working with advocates like you in this session and continually as we strive to address this problem and better this society. What we are doing, really, is increasing the decency of this country, our level of morality, our concern for our fellow man. When we conquer homelessness, which is fundamentally a problem of social isolation and abandonment, we are truly rebuilding the moral foundation of this great Nation.

TRIBUTE TO BRETT BOOT, BROCK GARDNER AND DANEN CLARKE

**HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 19, 2007*

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, it is my great honor to inform the House that three of my constituents in Georgia's 3rd Congressional District have won the Honor Medal With Crossed Palms, a distinction given the Boy Scouts of America to herald heroism carried out at extreme personal risk.

These courageous young men put their lives on the line to save a friend, and one of them died in the rescue attempt.

In July of 2005, during the onslaught of Hurricane Cindy, three Eagle Scouts, Brett Boot,

Brock Gardner and Danen Clarke, were at a park in Peachtree City, Ga., with a small group of family and friends. After they helped a man dislodge his golf cart from rising waters, Danen's cousin ventured into what appeared to be still waters near a flooded road and was immediately sucked under by an unseen rip current.

Thinking that the cousin was pinned by a possible grate, the three Scouts waded in the dangerous waters to feel around for him with their feet. The cousin had actually been sucked through a 40-foot-long culvert located 5 feet below the road, which wasn't visible under the high water. The cousin was swept under the road, reappearing on the other side with severe cuts on his feet, but alive.

Danen was then caught under the ferocious current, followed by Brock, whose one leg caught on the entrance of the 4-foot-wide culvert. Brett was behind Brock in the water and was able to secure him with his arms against the pull of the current.

Danen's body was found the next morning in the stream that feeds into Lake Peachtree, caught in branches that prevented him from being swept into the lake. It is believed that Danen hit his head on a large piece of the culvert, knocking him out and causing him to drown.

The awarding of the Honor Medal With Crossed Palms is as prestigious within the scouting community as it is rare. The honor has been awarded nationally only 199 times since it was created in 1922. The Boy Scouts of America have given out only four such medals this year, and I will have the great honor of presenting these awards at a ceremony later this month to Brock and to the siblings of Danen and Brett, the latter of whom is serving his church as a missionary in South America. The medals read: "The Honor Medal With Crossed Palms presented by the Boy Scouts of America upon the Recommendation of the National Court of Honor to Bretton Boot, Danen Clarke and Brock Gardner for unusual heroism and extraordinary skill or resourcefulness in saving or attempting to save life at extreme risk to self."

The courage and selflessness of these young men testifies to their character and to the unwavering values they learned from loving families, their church and, yes, from the Boy Scouts of America. Georgia's 3rd Congressional District proudly claims them as its own. I can think of no more deserving recipients for this award. The July 28th ceremony presents an opportunity to celebrate heroism and to remember and mourn Danen Clarke's sacrifice on that fateful day.

Danen, Brett and Brock set an example for us all. They will serve as an inspiration for present and future generations of Boy Scouts in Troop 208 and throughout the Flint River Council.

SECTION 8 VOUCHER REFORM ACT  
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 12, 2007*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 1851) to reform the housing choice voucher program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937:

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1851, the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act, and applaud Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS and Chairman BARNEY FRANK for their work on this important issue.

Housing, like food and health care, is a basic need, and it should be accessible to all Americans. Unfortunately, too many families find themselves without a stable and secure place to live because they cannot afford the high cost of housing in our country.

The Section 8 voucher program plays a critical role in preventing homelessness by expanding access to affordable housing. It is our nation's largest federal housing program, serving more than 2 million low-income families around our country. However, currently, the demand for Section 8 vouchers far exceeds the availability of vouchers. In my District in Minnesota, there are more than 5,000 households on the waitlist for Section 8, and the average wait time is anywhere from 5 to 7 years.

The Section 8 Voucher Reform Act expands and improves this important program and will ensure more families have access to safe, affordable housing. H.R. 1851 authorizes an additional 100,000 vouchers over the next 5 years. It also updates the formula used to allocate Section 8 voucher funds to housing agencies and simplifies the rent structure to eliminate current inefficiencies, allowing agencies to serve more families.

This legislation encourages self-sufficiency and rewards work by providing incentives, such as reducing rent disincentives for increases in earned income and offering income exemptions for adult full time student dependents. H.R. 1851 also promotes homeownership by allowing families to use a housing voucher as a down payment toward the purchase of their first home. Homeownership is the greatest source of wealth for many Americans. It strengthens our families and our communities.

Madam Speaker, every family deserves clean, stable, and affordable housing. I am proud to rise today in support of this important legislation.

TRIBUTE TO DANLEY STRAIGHT

**HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 19, 2007*

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the patriotism and self sacrifice of Air Force COL Danley Elson Straight of Longmont, CO, for his service to both his community and to his country during World War II, the Korean war, and the Vietnam war.

Straight was born in Greeley, CO, on October 8, 1922, the 11th of 12 children. After graduating from Greeley High School he earned his bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees from Colorado State College of Education. He also served in the Air Force during three wars and retired with more than 30 years of service as a full colonel command pilot. During his career, "the colonel" as he is

affectionately known, flew more than 29 types of aircraft, including *Flack Bait*, which is on display in the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum.

Straight's years of service to our country are complemented by his service to his community. After retiring from the Air Force in 1976, Straight volunteered with various groups including the American Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, the Longmont Rotary Club, Masons and Shriners, the Patient Advocacy Team, St. Vrain Photographic Society, the Salvation Army, Westview Presbyterian Church, and the Rollins Pass Restoration Association, for which he served as president for more than 25 years. Straight's motto was "Never give up."

On February 7, 2007, Danley Elson Straight passed away at the age of 84. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Juanita Watson Straight, his 5 children, 10 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to represent Mr. Straight and the other men and women who have given so much for our freedom. Like so many other members of the "greatest generation," I urge my colleagues to join me in expressing my heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation for the patriotic service of Danley Elson Straight.

HONORING SERGEANT ERIC A.  
LILL OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI  
OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Thursday, July 19, 2007*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Sergeant Eric A. Lill, a courageous young soldier and father, who died in Iraq on July 6, 2007. As we all deeply mourn his loss, we use this time to honor his life and express our gratitude for his dedicated service.

Eric Lill grew up in Chicago's Bridgeport neighborhood and graduated in 1997 from St. Lawrence High School in Burbank, IL. He then attended Marshall University where he played hockey and studied criminal justice. From an early age, Eric desired to serve the public and our Nation, and he felt called to enlist in the U.S. Army.

Eric's determination and outstanding performance enabled him to attain the rank of sergeant and become a mentor to other soldiers. Most recently, Sergeant Lill served under the 2nd Infantry Division and was deployed to Iraq in October 2006. During this time, Sergeant Lill utilized his background and interest in criminal justice to help train Iraqi police officers. Although this mission was hazardous, Sergeant Lill always downplayed the danger to his family so that they would not worry. Two days after Independence Day, an improvised explosive device detonated near Sergeant Lill's vehicle during combat operations in Baghdad. The injuries sustained by Sergeant Lill resulted in his death—he was only 28.

Aside from his military service to our Nation, Eric Lill was dedicated to his family as a loving father and son. He is survived by his two children, Cody and Mikayla, affectionately known to him as "Bug" and "Lala;" his parents, Charmaine and Tony; his sister, Kortne; and his maternal grandparents, John and Marlene Alvarado.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the loss of Sergeant Eric A. Lill. We will never forget his sacrifice and are forever indebted to him, as well as all of our soldiers who have died, for making the ultimate sacrifice for our country. My thoughts, prayers, and deepest sympathies are with the Lill family in this difficult time.

FREE THE ISRAELI SOLDIERS

SPEECH OF

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 12, 2007*

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the steadfast friendship between the United States and Israel and to express support for Israeli soldiers held captive by terrorist organizations.

July 12, 2007 marks the one year anniversary of Hezbollah's infiltration into northern Israel, and it is a stinging reminder of Hezbollah's attack that sparked the bloody conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

For the past year, three Israeli soldiers have been away from their families, held captive by terrorist organizations. Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev were kidnapped by Hezbollah in the attack on July 12, 2006, and Gilad Shalit was abducted by Hamas on June 25, 2006 near the Gaza Strip.

Gilad Shalit is the youngest of the three men at the age of 20. He began his service in July of 2005, and volunteered to work in a combat unit. Shalit loves math and sports. Ehud Goldwasser, 31, is always willing to lend a helping hand. Passionate about photography, sailing, and the environment, Goldwasser is recently married and looks forward to starting a family. Eldad Regev, 26, is a law student at Bar Ilan University. Regev enjoys soccer, music, and reading. The families and friends of these talented young men look forward to their safe return.

Since its independence in 1948, Israel has continuously struggled to protect its citizens and ensure the safety of its men and women in uniform. As a Member of Congress, I recognize the bond between the United States and Israel and support the Israeli people on this solemn anniversary.

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF FUNDS FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAN WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 19, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to prevent the Bush Administration from launching war in Iran without prior congressional authorization. It is a companion bill to S. 759, authored by Senator JIM WEBB of Virginia.

This is not a unique proposal—several of our colleagues in the House have introduced resolutions expressing the sense of Congress

that the President should not initiate military action against Iran without first obtaining authorization from Congress.

This legislation would establish a binding legal limit on the ability of the President to expend funds to commence military action against Iran in the absence of explicit prior congressional authorization.

I think several factors require Congress to insist that the President meet that requirement before committing this country to another war.

Those factors include this administration's inability or unwillingness to engage with the Iranian regime, the stated interest on the part of many administration officials and political supporters in attacking Iran, and the U.S. deployment of additional aircraft carrier groups to the Persian Gulf.

These have led many—likely including the Iranian regime—to think the U.S. is intent on preparing a military strike against Iran. While that perception could be far from the mark, I think there is no doubt that there are increased risks of confrontation brought on by heightened tensions in the region.

If we've learned nothing else from the war in Iraq, we should have learned that saber rattling doesn't get us far—especially when the tough rhetoric comes from an administration with a history of mismanaging the war in Iraq, a war that is in its fifth year of straining our military and depleting our Nation's blood and treasure.

As I said in 2002—before voting against the resolution authorizing war in Iraq—I am reluctant to vest in the President all discretion about when and where America will go to war. I thought then and I think today that Congress, which has the constitutional responsibility to declare war, must play a more significant role in authorizing the use of our armed forces in what could become a full-scale war.

My purpose in introducing this legislation is to reassert Congress's constitutional responsibility and to remind the Bush Administration of the important role that Congress plays when it comes to matters of war and peace.

I recognize that the President, as commander-in-chief, must have some flexibility in deciding whether to allow U.S. forces to conduct intelligence gathering and to directly respond to attacks or possible attacks from Iran. That's why my legislation makes exceptions for these contingencies.

Madam Speaker, my introduction of this legislation should not be seen as evidence that I deny the reality of the potential danger Iran presents to our country, our allies, and others.

The prospect of an Iran with nuclear weapons is a matter of serious concern for America and the rest of the world. Since the revelation of its nuclear program, Iran has defied the international community by continuing to work to advance it, Iran's president has publicly stated his intention to "wipe Israel off the map," and there is evidence that Iran is arming insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan.

So it is no surprise that there are also reports—as recently as last month—that the internal debate on Iran among the White House, State Department, and Defense Department is heating up, and that the mood is shifting back toward military action against Iran. My bill responds to those reports by reasserting the basic principle that Congress must consent before the president can take such action.

Sending our troops into harm's way is a decision that affects all Americans, as we've