

EXPRESSING THANKS TO THE
NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION
BATTALION 18

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my welcome home greetings to the men and women of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 18 as they return from their deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. On Saturday, these sailors and their families will gather at Sacramento's Naval Operational Support Center for a homecoming celebration and I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring their service.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 18, often called NMCB 18, is made up of 14 detachments of naval reserve units from across the northwestern United States. For NMCB 18's nearly 500 members, their 9-month tour in Iraq meant time away from their families and loved ones, often at great personal sacrifice.

The battalion's motto, "We are Strong, Mighty and True; Genuine, Solid and Able to Do" summed up their mission while in Iraq. Their assignment was to build the necessary infrastructure to support forward based Marines in the Al Anbar Province. This included building hundreds of South West Asian huts to shelter over 3,500 Marines, laying 5,000 cubic yards of concrete and hauling over 33,000 cubic yards of material.

Among many things, their combined efforts helped establish nineteen combat outposts, construct eleven culvert crossings and complete 4 water wells. Across Iraq's Al Anbar Province these Seabees have installed wooden floors in Marines' tents, added air conditioning units and installed shower and bathroom trailers. Their work has made life a little bit easier for the Marines on the front lines. Each time the dedicated sailors of NMCB 18 were asked to complete a project, it was likely to be completed under the scheduled time and without a safety incident. In fact, NMCB 18 had the lowest number of safety incidents of any of the previous 6 battalions that preceded them.

Unfortunately, the realities of war hit home to the sailors of NMCB 18 on October 25, 2006 when they lost one of their own. Petty Officer 2nd Class Chuck Komppa of Belgrade, Montana died from enemy action in Al Anbar Province. Komppa was traveling between cities in order to assess the living conditions of our Marines when his convoy came under attack. I ask that all of my colleagues extend their heartfelt sympathies and sincere gratitude to his wife Delisa and their 2 children.

In a true feat of the determination, teamwork and ingenuity that characterized their time in Iraq, the sailors of NMCB 18 built a Morale, Welfare, and Recreation hut in less than 24 hours for the service men and women at Al Asad Air Base. This facility now serves as a place for rest and relaxation and allows servicemembers to call home in the privacy they deserve. Appropriately, the MWR hut was dedicated in the memory of Petty Officer Komppa.

These sailors did their job away from the safety of the more protected parts of Iraq and

by all accounts their mission was a success. In reviewing his battalion's time in Iraq NMCB Commander Dan Gould said he had nothing but "seam-bursting pride" for his sailors.

Madam Speaker, all of these sailors left their families and loved ones and placed their lives on the line for others. We owe these true citizen soldiers our thanks and gratitude. It is an honor for me to represent such fine men and women in Congress. Once again, I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking them for their service. Welcome home.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DIANE
WHITAKER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Diane Whitaker for greatly enriching the community of Southern Nevada by serving as an exemplary role model and business-woman.

A resident of Las Vegas since 1976, Diane personifies the value of hard work. Coming from humble beginnings as a stay at home mother struggling to support her five children with her disabled husband, Diane re-entered the work force as a part time typist at the Ensign Federal Credit Union. Her determination and strong work ethic soon propelled her into a full time position at the company. Her ambition and talent was recognized and she worked her way up the corporate ladder as a teller, bookkeeper, marketing manager, human resource manager, and chief operations officer to eventually become the CEO of Ensign Federal Credit Union in 1998, a position which she has held ever since.

Diane's accomplishments as a professional are bolstered by her contributions to the Las Vegas community. She serves as a member of the local Boy Scouts of America Roundtable, and has sponsored local music festivals through Ensign Federal Credit Union.

Diane's ability to overcome the obstacles women face in the workplace while rising to the position of CEO, along with her community efforts and commitment to her family, make her an example of the realization of the American dream, coming from humble beginnings to achieve great things.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Diane Whitaker. Her contributions to our rapidly growing economy will continue to benefit our community. I wish her continued success in her career and future.

CONGRATULATING MR. JOSHUA
BORGSMILLER

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2007

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents Mr. Joshua Borgsmiller of Elizabeth, Colorado, who will attend a People to People World Leadership Forum in 2008. His outstanding academic merits and communal involvement have laid a solid foundation of individual integ-

ity and dedication: both characteristics of a qualified leader. I am honored to represent such a promising young man.

Created in 1956, the People to People Program is an educational travel program dedicated to fostering leadership potential in youth worldwide. People to People has helped more than 200,000 students and professionals develop their leadership skills based upon Dwight D. Eisenhower's belief that "people can make a difference where governments cannot." This unique interaction and exposure will enable Mr. Borgsmiller to gain a greater understanding and insider's perspective of Washington, D.C.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to acknowledge one of Colorado's own. Please join me in congratulating Mr. Borgsmiller and wishing him the best in his future endeavors.

A SENIOR AMERICAN CEO GETS
THE PRIORITIES RIGHT

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2007

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, David D'Allesandro was a very successful CEO of one of America's leading financial institutions, the John Hancock Company. Mr. D'Allesandro consistently demonstrated during his tenure as the leader of this important corporation that social responsibility and successful activity in the private sector are fully compatible. In the Boston Globe on September 3rd, he published an article that exemplifies the thoughtful and constructive approach he brought.

Madam Speaker, I believe that the most important thing we can do domestically is to demonstrate that understanding and support of a prosperous private sector is not only consistent with support for a vigorous and well funded public sector, but in fact benefits from such an approach. As he says, "If we are going to be globally competitive and continue to attain record profits in this ever-evolving competitive globalization, that same corporate America has to 'cough up' and take more financial responsibility for our greatest asset: our children and their education."

Noting the great wealth that is being created by pools of private capital America, he asks pointedly, "If there is that much money running around, why does the National Education Association report that we are facing a potential nationwide teacher shortage with more than a million teachers retiring in the near future and the need for more than 2 million teachers in the next decade? . . . Among the reasons for this turnover is inadequate pay compared to other professions with the same training requirements."

Madam Speaker, David D'Allesandro is asserting a point that other corporate leaders must understand in their own interests and in the interests of a more equitable society. I ask that this very thoughtful article be printed here because it makes such an important contribution to our national debate.

(By David D'Allesandro)

ECONOMY THRIVES, BUT SCHOOLS GO BEGGING
Starting tomorrow, traffic in and around every major city including Boston will once again be congested due mainly to two seasonal phenomena: school buses packed with

children and cars of executives back from vacationing through the lazy days of August.

But something is different this year. Very different. The children are returning to many public school systems that are strapped for cash, and the executives are returning to businesses that are overflowing with cash.

As a capitalist, I believe in free markets, reasonable tax rates, competition, high compensation for performance and I am all for businesses being incredibly successful. But there is something disturbing—really disturbing—that while Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson recently said, “This is far and away the strongest global economy I’ve seen in my business lifetime,” our public school systems are suffering beyond comprehension.

Business, particularly large corporations and private equity funds, will spend billions each year on reinvestment in products, technology, distribution, advertising, and an endless array of tools. Yet, they are not directly assessed to subsidize their overwhelming reliance on our education system to feed them high quality, educated adults who will fuel their growth.

Their counterargument is that part of their personal and business taxes find their way back to schools. And, of course they will quickly point out “this or that” voluntary corporate public education initiative. But the growing disparity between their growth and schools’ budget problems seems particularly and fundamentally wrong.

Let us consider just a few indicators: Despite some recent credit market issues, the Dow Jones Industrial Average hit record levels over 13,000 this year. And even touched 14,000 in contrast to bottoming at less than 7,300 just five years ago. Record profits the last few years have been a big driver.

Goldman Sachs recently stated in US News and World Report: “If we and the consensus are correct, then the period 2003–2008 will have been one of the most powerful periods of economic growth globally since accurate data has been collectible for much of the world.”

Armed with hundreds of billions of dollars, private equity firms have been dominating the acquisition landscape. They have scooped up thousands of companies including many high profile ones like Hertz, Toys R Us, Neiman Marcus, Metro Goldwyn Mayer to name a few. Their capital, combined with considerable tax breaks, have created enormous wealth for these private firms.

So, if there is that much money running around, why does the National Education Association report that we are facing a potential nationwide teacher shortage with more than a million teachers retiring in the near future and the need for more than 2 million teachers in the next decade? As alarming as that is, the NEA says 50 percent of new teachers leave within five years. Among the reasons for this turnover is inadequate pay compared to other professions with the same training requirements.

Why, according to a 2007 Boston Globe examination of property tax rates in 298 Massachusetts cities and towns, has the average homeowner’s tax bill gone up 49 percent since 2000?

Why are so many communities being forced to consider overrides to improve school buildings, provide basic services, and maintain after-school and sports activities? When towns like Stoneham are almost forced to eliminate all competitive sports activities, there is something terribly wrong.

While the politicians debate options from “cheeseburger taxes,” increased highway tolls, casinos, and Governor Patrick’s new

bond debt proposals, both the federal and state governments need to rethink who are the true benefactors of our education system. In all fairness, if businesses are being properly assessed for these windfalls, then more current tax dollars should find their way to education. If not, then the government should step up and fix it.

Naturally, corporate America will say that the problem is inefficient school systems. And while that may very well be correct, most corporations are not particularly efficient either. This is primarily a diversionary tactic to shift focus away from the corporate coffers.

Corporate executives will also contend that reinvesting large profit sums in public education would not be in the direct interests of their investors. Well, they would be wrong. A highly educated American work force ready to compete with the emerging economies of countries like India and China is very much in the interests of shareholders.

If we are going to be globally competitive and continue to attain record profits in this ever-evolving competitive globalization, that same corporate America has to “cough up” and take more financial responsibility for our greatest asset: our children and their education.

EXPRESSING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE PAUL E. GILLMOR, A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF OHIO

SPEECH OF

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in heartfelt sorrow to mourn the passing of the Honorable PAUL E. GILLMOR, a true friend and a wonderful statesman for the people of Ohio. I was greatly saddened when I was told the terrible news of his passing this morning. The House of Representatives has lost a hard-working leader who was a friend to many on both sides of the aisle in this chamber.

My heart goes out to his wife Karen, and their children Linda, Julie, Paul, Adam, and Connor during this difficult time. I will be keeping his memory, and his surviving family in my thoughts and prayers. I pray for his Washington, DC and Ohio Congressional staffers who have served him and the people of the 5th Congressional District of Ohio.

Congressman GILLMOR never forgot his roots and he was always a champion for the people who he represented in Congress. He won his first primary election for Congress by only 27 votes; the grit and determination that carried him to victory on that day never left him for the remainder of his service in Congress. When I first arrived to the House in 1997, I was instantly impressed with the plain-spoken gentleman from Ohio. He leaves behind a strong legacy of service to this House. I have lost a friend, and words cannot fully express my sorrow in his passing. God Bless.

EXPRESSING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE PAUL E. GILLMOR, A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF OHIO

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise with our colleagues today to pay tribute to the lifetime of public service of our late colleague PAUL GILLMOR of Ohio.

I know this House today is in shock at the devastating news of PAUL’s passing just last night. I join in expressing profound sympathy to PAUL’s family—his wife Karen, two daughters Linda and Julie, and three sons, Paul Michael, and twins, Connor and Adam. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

PAUL, who began his 10th term in the House in January, chose a noble life of serving his country. A graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University and the University of Michigan Law School, he attained the rank of captain while on active duty as an Air Force judge advocate during the Vietnam War. Before coming to Congress as the representative of the 5th District of Ohio, he diligently served the people of Ohio for 22 years in the Ohio Senate. As a state senator, he was unanimously elected Republican leader five times, and served as president of the Senate for three General Assemblies.

Paul was a respected member of this House and friend to those on both sides of the aisle. He loved this institution and worked hard for the people of his district and for all Americans not only on national issues, but he also was unanimously elected in 2006 by representatives of the 26 NATO countries to serve as vice president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, in remembering PAUL GILLMOR and his proud life of public service, I am reminded of the words of scripture in Matthew 25: “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

This House and this Nation will miss the service of PAUL GILLMOR. God bless you, PAUL, and God’s blessings on your family and many friends and constituents in Ohio.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2007

Ms. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, due to an illness I was unable to vote on Tuesday, September 4, 2007 and Wednesday, September 5, 2007.

Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall votes 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, and 853.