

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
LARRY S. PIERCE POST OFFICE
ACT

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of legislation I introduced to designate the United States Postal Service facility located at 427 North Street in Taft, California as the "Larry S. Pierce Post Office."

U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Pierce was born in Oklahoma in 1941. As a young child his family moved to Taft, California, which I represent. SSG Pierce attended Taft City Schools and would have graduated from Taft Union High School with the Class of 1959, but decided to serve his country by joining the U.S. Army in 1958. SSG Pierce served with the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade in the Vietnam War.

On September 20, 1965 near Ben Cat in Vietnam, SSG Pierce, while leading his reconnaissance platoon, was ambushed by hostile forces. SSG Pierce and his squad successfully routed the hostile forces from their location. During pursuit of the enemy, SSG Pierce heroically sacrificed his own life to save the lives of his fellow soldiers by throwing himself on an antipersonnel mine as it exploded.

In February 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson posthumously awarded SSG Pierce the Medal of Honor on behalf of the United States Congress. SSG Pierce's Medal of Honor citation notes in part his "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty," his "inspiring leadership and personal courage," and his "profound concern for his fellow soldiers" acting with "extraordinary heroism, at the cost of his life" to save the lives of his fellow soldiers, which reflects the "highest traditions of the U.S. Army" and "great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of his country."

SSG Pierce would have been 66 years old this year, and is survived by his wife Verlin, who currently lives in Bakersfield, California, and his children Teresa, Kelley, and Gregory. My legislation is a fitting honor for this Vietnam War hero, who sacrificed his life to save the lives of fellow soldiers, by naming the post office in his hometown of Taft in his memory.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, on September 26, 2007 I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall votes No. 912 and No. 913. Had I been present, I would have voted: Rollcall vote No. 912: "aye." Rollcall vote No. 913: "nay."

EFFORTS TO COMBAT
TUBERCULOSIS

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address a deadly epidemic that is facing our planet today—tuberculosis. We have learned that no country, no matter how advanced its health infrastructure, is no longer immune from tuberculosis (TB).

Fortunately, through the generosity of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and leadership in the U.S. Congress, we can make a major difference in developing urgently needed tools to fight this problem. On September 18, the Gates Foundation announced new funding in the fight to stop TB by granting \$280 million to several organizations creating new tools to curb this disease, including the largest single award to any research or product development organization—\$200 million to the Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation, which is located in my congressional district.

Those who live in the developing countries know this disease every day. This global epidemic has confronted us in several ways in the last few months. The case of the airline passenger infected with drug-resistant tuberculosis reminded Americans how vulnerable we all are to a disease we thought was a problem of the past or an affliction just affecting the developing world. In this truly global world, diseases such as tuberculosis know no boundaries.

The statistics are staggering. TB kills 1.6 million people per year, or 4,400 every single

day. It is the largest killer worldwide of women of reproductive age and of people with HIV/AIDS. TB bacilli are in the bodies of one out of every three people in the world today. This devastating disease is challenging the best health systems and is threatening the lives of thousands in the developing world.

But Congress is not sitting still in the face of such troubling events. Just recently, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee reported out the Stop TB Now Act of 2007, which commits this country to a new recognition of the threat of TB and a larger effort to finally rid this planet of this scourge. And the House provides \$313 million for global TB efforts in its FY 2008 State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill.

These efforts follow the bold, innovative, heartfelt, and committed leadership of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. As important as the Gates Foundation's latest \$280 million investment in tuberculosis is, it is not enough. A new vaccine candidate must go through large and expensive clinical trials, involving thousands of people and costing over hundreds of millions of dollars.

Private philanthropy cannot be the only solution to this important challenge. It is only right that the United States government, and other donor governments, step up to the plate and finish the job.

Vaccines are the key to ending epidemics. They are among the most medically and economically effective health interventions available. The United States already funds research to develop much-needed vaccines for HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other global diseases. Funding TB vaccine development is a logical and humanitarian next step for us to take. European donors are already contributing to this fight; for example, the government of the Netherlands has made a sizable commitment of approximately \$25 million to the Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation for vaccine development. The United States should shoulder our fair share of this important shared mission.

I urge my colleagues to appropriate the necessary resources to complete this vital work and follow the outstanding leadership demonstrated by the Gates Foundation's generous investment in TB research.