

RECOGNIZING ANNE ARUNDEL
COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOR ITS
ASSISTANCE TO MILITARY FAMILIES

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Anne Arundel Community College and its efforts to assist the men and women of the United States Armed Forces and their families as they return from combat overseas.

Anne Arundel Community College is now offering free counseling for military families in a four week course entitled "Reunited: Family Life After Deployment." The purpose of this course is to assist the men and women returning from service overseas reintegrate into their family and civilian life. These four, two-hour classes, which will be offered free to all service personnel thanks to the Friends of The Parenting Center scholarship program, will help participants identify the signs and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It will also help returnees learn how to deal with the emotional responses that arise from separation during service, how to adjust parenting styles, and to balance disciplinary roles within the family.

This course is the most recent example of how Anne Arundel Community College, and its President, Dr. Smith, continually strive to embrace the community that surrounds the campus. Outreach like this does not just happen by itself; it takes the time and energy of concerned individuals who hear of a community need and take the initiative to make a difference. Individuals like Dr. Lou Aymard and his staff at the Parenting Center who made this course a reality, as well as Bruce Turnquist, Psy.D., a clinical psychologist who will be leading the class discussion, are to be commended. To these individuals, and those at Fort Meade and the United States Naval Academy who shared their insight, I offer my sincere gratitude on behalf of all the returning men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Since 2001, over 1.5 million soldiers have been deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan. A 2004 Army survey found that nearly 20 percent of soldiers returning home suffered from clinical anxiety, depression, or PTSD. More recent surveys show that 27 percent of those who serve longer deployments or multiple deployments have some form of mental illness or PTSD. I have heard first hand during hearings in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee and meetings with veterans' groups about how these conditions can often lead to alcohol and drug abuse, divorce, and financial and legal problems. It is tragic and wrong that these treatable conditions continue to have such a devastating impact upon the families of these veterans.

The sad fact is that almost 80 percent of these returning veterans who need assistance to deal with these mental illnesses are not referred to treatment. Because of this phenomenon, I have joined as a cosponsor of the Lane Evans Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2007, which would require that all veterans who serve on active duty during a period of war receive mental health screening and, when necessary, mental health

treatment and family counseling. We have already passed significant legislation during this Congress to improve the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs health care delivery system and I hope that we will soon be able to take up and pass this legislation as well. This initiative by AACC represents how much can be done if we simply take advantage of the resources and opportunities within our communities to address this problem and to assist a population that has sacrificed so much.

Madam Speaker, I want to again thank all those at Anne Arundel Community College involved in the "Reunited: Family Life After Deployment" program. Anne Arundel Community College is a first-class institution and they have truly stepped up to support our Nation's veterans.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FELIX
SPARKS

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and mourn the passing of a great Coloradan, Brigadier General and Supreme Court Associate Justice, Felix Sparks, who passed away on Monday, September 24th, 2007.

Although Felix Sparks was not originally from Colorado, his roots in the West and his commitment to public service in make him an indelible part of Colorado history. Born in Texas and raised in Arizona during the Great Depression, Felix Sparks epitomizes the "Greatest Generation." Felix joined the service before the World War II, and assigned to the 157th Infantry Regiment of the 45th Division, where he attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, leading soldiers in the European Theater.

In addition to his brave service in combat, Felix also bore witness to the Holocaust. Lt. Col. Sparks was in command of the unit dispatched to liberate and secure the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau. In the aftermath of that experience, Felix Sparks struggled to contain the outrage of his men, some of whom took it upon themselves to execute German soldiers in an episode that remains controversial to this day. After the war, Felix Sparks often spoke about the Holocaust and reminded younger generations that we have a moral obligation to prevent such offenses in the future. His service during the war also earned him many commendations, including a Silver Star and a Purple Heart.

Returning to the United States, Felix Sparks moved to Colorado and joined the Colorado National Guard in 1947. This began a long and distinguished career in the Guard, ending thirty years later after Felix had risen through the ranks to become Brigadier General and commanding officer of the Colorado National Guard. His legacy was so important to the Colorado Guard that the Guard's Centennial Armory is named in his honor.

In addition to his numerous achievements in the military, Felix Sparks will be well regarded for his work as a lawyer. He earned his degree from the University of Colorado law school in 1948 and moved to Delta, serving there as District Attorney. He was appointed

as the youngest-ever associate justice of the Colorado Supreme Court in 1956. Unfortunately, he left the court at the end of the year because Colorado then elected our judges and he lost his campaign to keep the seat.

Poor luck at the polls inured to the benefit of Colorado's environment, however, because in 1958 Felix accepted a position as the director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, where he was instrumental in crafting an environmentally sustainable and sensible water policy. For his work on the board he was awarded the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal by Governor Lamm in 1979.

As both a civilian and a soldier, Felix Sparks became an icon to all Coloradans. He was not only committed to the ideal of public service, he excelled at it.

I can think of no higher tribute than to simply say that Felix Sparks was a great American.

Colorado has lost a favorite son. America and the ideals we cherish were embodied in his life of public service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I missed several rollcall votes on Monday, October 1, 2007, Tuesday October 2, 2007 and Wednesday October 3, 2007, to attend funeral services for a dear family friend. I would like to enter into the record how I intended to vote on these rollcall votes:

On Roll No. 924, to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution H. Con. Res. 185, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 925, to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2276, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 926, to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3325, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 927, to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3087, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 928, to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 635, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 929, to suspend the rules and agree to H. Con. Res. 203, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 930, to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2828, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 931, to suspend the rules and agree to H. Con. Res. 200, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 932, to order the previous question on H. Res. 701, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 933, to order the previous question on H. Res. 702, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 934, agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 702, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 935, the Conyers amendment H.R. 928, I would have voted "yes."

On Roll No. 936, to recommit with instructions H.R. 928, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 937, passage H.R. 928, I would have voted "yes."