

Michael Murphy, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor this week and I was not present in the House chamber to vote on rollcall 994.

I would have voted “yea” on rollcall 994 had I been present.

JOSHUA OMVIG VETERANS
SUICIDE PREVENTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2007

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act. As an original cosponsor who voted for its passage in the House earlier this year, I am pleased that this bill has passed both the House and the Senate. I look forward to sending this bill to the President with such overwhelming support.

H.R. 327 will expand awareness of the serious problem of suicide among veterans suffering from PTSD and of the special needs of veterans at high risk for depression. Furthermore, it would develop and implement a program that would include mandatory training for professionals who interact with veterans, screening for suicide risk factors, counseling and treatment for at-risk veterans, and 24-hour veterans' mental health care availability.

It is a sad reality that we as a Nation must face once again the repercussions of war, and it is equally tragic that we are forced to acknowledge where our system has failed our servicemembers and veterans. I will continue to work with my colleagues to forge solutions in correcting our military care structure to ensure they receive the care that they earned and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, passing this bill is one way to correct what is wrong with the current system. May we all recognize the service of those who have selflessly given to our country, especially those brave men and women who are serving today around the world. I know you join me in praying for their safe and quick return home.

IN PRAISE OF THE TRANS-ATLANTIC LEGISLATORS' DIALOGUE MEETINGS HELD EARLIER THIS MONTH IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues in the Congress to a highly successful meeting of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue (TLD) that was held in Las Vegas from October 5–8, 2007. The United States delegation is currently benefiting from the excellent leadership of Chairwoman SHELLEY BERKLEY, the gentlelady from Nevada. She worked tirelessly to make this meeting a great success and introduced her European guests to the fine city of Las Vegas that she represents.

Chairwoman BERKLEY first became a member of the TLD in April 2006, served as its

vice-chair in December 2006, and took the reins during the new Congress in 2007. She has long been an advocate for transatlantic relations. She is ably joined by her Republican vice-chairman, Representative CLIFF STEARNS from Florida, who also has a history of European engagement.

The TLD constitutes the formal response of the European Parliament and the U.S. Congress to the commitment in the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA) of 1995 to enhance parliamentary ties between the European Union and the United States. Building on the existing interparliamentary relationship, the TLD includes bi-annual meetings between American and European legislators that address topics of mutual interest with a view to fostering an ongoing dialogue and enhancing the level of transatlantic discourse.

The most recent session in Nevada focused on a wide range of foreign policy challenges, including the Middle East, Kosovo, Russia, and China. Another session focused on regulatory initiatives being addressed under the auspices of the newly established Transatlantic Economic Council in which legislators are involved for the first time in administration discussions regarding more effective regulation.

I particularly welcomed Representative BERKLEY's initiative to place anti-Semitism on the TLD agenda for the first time ever, as this issue must be seriously addressed by legislators on both sides of the Atlantic. The delegates also discussed the growing challenge of climate change. In addition, Representative BERKLEY showed her European counterparts a wide range of issues facing her constituency, bringing the delegation to Nellis Air Force Base to view military training facilities and arranging a briefing on Department of Energy plans to establish a safe repository for nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain.

I commend Chairwoman BERKLEY for the energy that she has brought to the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, as well as the outstanding job she did organizing a productive and informative session in Nevada. Her attention to detail was remarkable as were her efforts to be a hospitable and thoughtful hostess, including inviting European consuls to attend evening events and renowned speakers to make opening remarks during meeting sessions. Chairwoman BERKLEY is an excellent ambassador of American goodwill towards the European Union, and I am deeply grateful for the outstanding work she has done as leader of the American delegation of the TLD.

Madam Speaker, I would like to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the joint statement that was agreed upon by American and European legislators at the 63rd meeting of the TLD in Las Vegas. It highlights the rich agenda of this meeting, as well as the numerous areas in which there was strong agreement across the Atlantic.

TRANSATLANTIC LEGISLATORS' DIALOGUE 63RD MEETING OF DELEGATIONS FROM THE UNITED STATES AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT—JOINT STATEMENT

We, Members of the European Parliament and the United States House of Representatives, held our 63rd interparliamentary meeting (Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue) in Las Vegas, Nevada on 5–8 October 2007.

Building on the joint statement issued following our last meeting in Charleston on 1–3 December 2006, we stressed the importance of regular dialogue on a range of political, social and economic issues that affect all of

our citizens. We agreed to report back to our parent bodies on the content and outcome of our discussions, particularly in the areas where joint efforts are likely to result in positive outcomes.

We agreed that legislators on both sides of the Atlantic should increase dialogue and consultation amongst themselves in order to prevent possible conflicts of legislation. Direct and timely contacts between specialist committees from Congress and the European Parliament—such as those that have occurred in recent months within the TLD framework—have been valuable means of enhancing cooperation; the exchange of information should be continued and enhanced. The European delegation welcomed the invitation from the U.S. House Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture to discuss agricultural issues and organic farming in greater detail.

We examined a wide array of foreign policy issues, agreeing that joint action by the United States and the European Union is the most effective way to approach problems that affect both sides of the Atlantic. We had a stimulating discussion led by Ambassador Dennis Ross on the myriad of challenges in the Middle East, particularly regarding the nuclear threat posed by Iran and efforts to further the peace process in the region. We discussed the future status of Kosovo, including the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the Balkans. We expressed concerns about worrying developments in Russia's domestic and foreign policies and agreed to discuss these issues in greater detail at our next session.

We assessed our economic and political relations with China, emphasizing the importance of toy and product safety as well as the need for transparency in China's financial and business practices. In particular, we called on China to play a greater role in promoting a peaceful resolution to the ongoing conflict and particularly to the current violent crackdown in Burma. We also called upon China to assist in solving the horrific humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

During the dialogue we explored the current status of anti-Semitism, anti-discrimination, race hate and civil liberties in the United States and Europe. Abe Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League provided an overview of the current situation. We agreed to continue our open discussion about these issues at future meetings as well as to address them within the United States and EU Member States.

We discussed climate change following an informative presentation by Michael Totten of Conservation International. We agreed to continue exchanging strategies for combating the environmental challenges confronting our planet.

We also: 1. had a briefing at Nellis Air Force Base and visited the facility designated for training American and coalition military personnel; we also saw a presentation about the Thunderbird pilots and viewed the F-22 fighter plane.

2. heard a briefing by the United States Department of Energy regarding its plans to establish a safe repository for nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain as well as concerns summarized by the Nevada Agency for Nuclear Projects.

We welcomed the establishment of a Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) at the April 2007 EU-US Summit. We agreed that the TEC initiative should be characterized by transparency and consultation of stakeholders: legislators, consumers, and producers should be informed in a comprehensive and timely manner by the EU and US executive bodies on the advancement of activities as well as the definition of priorities for future work. The establishment of the

'advisory group' to the TEC, which includes the leaders of the three dialogues constituted under the New Transatlantic Agenda, is an important step in this direction. Furthermore, we believe that awareness of the transatlantic impact of proposed legislation and regulation should be developed in the relevant legislative and regulatory bodies.

Our discussions focused on a range of regulatory issues that will affect legislators in the United States and the European Union. With regard to priorities for future activities within the TEC, the TLD welcomed progress on items contained in the list of 'lighthouse projects' and related initiatives included in the 2007 Summit declaration. In particular, we developed a series of recommendations that we agreed should be taken into account during the TEC's first meeting on 9 November 2007:

With regard to accounting standards, efforts should be made to reach agreement on the equivalence of US GAAP and IFRS (as implemented by the EU) in order to avoid requirements for reconciliation. Important progress registered in recent discussions between regulators needs to be finalized as soon as possible.

With regard to trade and cargo security, achieving reciprocity and mutual recognition of security standards is of the utmost importance. We recognized concerns about the recently-passed U.S. legislation requiring 100 per cent cargo scanning.

With regard to intellectual property, a commitment is needed to harmonize the different patent regimes on the basis of the 'first-to-file' system.

With regard to investment, obstacles to bilateral investment should be addressed via an operative dialogue.

With regard to biofuels, developing compatible specifications between the EU and U.S. is a clear priority, particularly in view of achieving wider international harmonization at International Standards Organization (ISO) level.

With regard to the safety of toys and other products, recognizing that it represents a major concern to consumers on both sides of the Atlantic, improvements should be discussed between regulators and complementary standards should be developed.

Both sides renewed their commitment to make the TLD's work more relevant to the United States House of Representatives and to the European Parliament. In so doing, we resolved to provide the TLD with the required resources to improve the effectiveness of our dialogue and realize the full potential of our interparliamentary relationship.

HONORING THE TOWN OF BARNSTABLE

HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, I rise today so that my colleagues in the House of Representatives can join me in recognizing the Town of Barnstable, Massachusetts for its distinguished achievement in being named one of 2007's "All-America Cities."

For 58 years, the National Civic League's "All-America City" Awards have been presented to localities that demonstrate an exceptional ability to rise to the challenges involved in building and sustaining safe, healthy communities. Toward this end, the Town of Barnstable continues to be a model for civic

engagement, excelling in its efforts to involve the business community, nonprofit organizations, and citizens in developing ingenious solutions to local problems.

While the Town of Barnstable has applied the same cooperative approach in tackling a wide array of challenges, three in particular merit its designation as one of this year's ten "All-America Cities." Under its visionary "economic development stimulus plan," the Town of Barnstable breathed new life into the Main Street and waterfront areas of downtown Hyannis. This initiative helped to promote growth in an environmentally and socially responsible way, while boosting the area's cultural richness and scenic beauty.

Thanks to the Town's multi-pronged Affordable Housing Plan—an ambitious project that aims to secure 1,000 units of housing over a 10-year period—residents making below 80 percent of the area's median income will have expanded opportunities to make home ownership a reality.

Finally, the Town's creation of a Youth Commission has ensured the area's young people have a strong voice in the democratic process, advising the Town Council on the legislation and issues that matter most to Barnstable's youth and families.

It gives me pride to see the Town of Barnstable receive national attention for all the hard work and dedication that I have long admired. As we pause to reflect on this prestigious honor, I want to commend all the residents of Barnstable for their collective efforts to make the community a better place to live and work.

I particularly want to thank Town Manager John Klimm for his admirable leadership, and for seeing through the initiatives that have made Barnstable an "All-America City." Congratulations on an award well-deserved. For today, tomorrow, and long into the future, I have great confidence that the Town of Barnstable will continue to serve as a model for communities all across the country.

CONGRATULATING LA VEGA HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1957 ON ITS 50TH REUNION

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Mr. EDWARDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the members of the La Vega High School Class of 1957 on their 50th reunion. It is a privilege to represent La Vega High School, located in Bellmead in my district.

The members of the La Vega High School Class of 1957 have made great contributions to our Nation, State, and Central Texas community. They have served us as soldiers, teachers, doctors, clergy, leaders in Federal, State, and local government, captains of business and industry, and all facets of American life. In short, the diverse lives and accomplishments of the La Vega High School Class of 1957 have contributed significantly to the social fabric of our State and Nation and their ongoing contributions to our American way of life will be felt for years to come.

I congratulate them on this special occasion and wish them all the best in the years ahead.

Members of the La Vega High School Class of 1957: Joe Aleman, Annette Brown, Mildred Andrie, Leo Bales, Elden Barrett, Billy Beechly, David Bounds, Stanley Boyd, Keith Branch, Juanita Kellough, Judy Braswell, Virginia Brink, Karen Bruner, Edie Bridges, Sarah Burch, Quincy Butler, Jo Campbell, Curtis Carpenter, Ken Christensen, Wanda Christopherson, Anita Colunga, Dan Crum, Jack Culverhouse, Charles Cooper, Jerry Davis, Wendell Davis, Kay DeArmon, Carroll Deaton, Margaret DeLoach, Carl Diver, Garland Dorsey, Juanita Embry, Suzanne Francis, Mildred Fidel, Bobbie Gill, Beth Goodman, William Glaser, Thomas Guinn, Jerry Haak, Wayne Harris, Robert Hawkins, Harold Hern, Darlene Hite, Dean Hord, Anita Ibsen, Karen Johnson, Albert Kilgo, Judie King, Lou Lee, Barbara Lemonski, Betty Love, Linda Loveless, Bonnie Lundy, Barbara Mabry, Kenneth Makowski, Thomas Matthys, Nancy McDaniel, James McKee, James McKinney, Joe Moody, Barbara Moore, Janell Morris, Francis Nivers, Norma Parker, Mary Pickens, Henry Plemons, Barbara Phillips, Beverly Poston, Carol Allen, Daniel Ramos, Irene Rinehart, Albert Roberts, Lida Rush, Shirley Scott, Patricia Shaver, Donald Scruggs, Dorothy Sharp, Emily Spurlock, John Spurlock, Martha Staley, William Strahl, Patty Sutton, Evelyn Sykora, James Saul, Bobby Tacker, Dixie Taylor, Bobby Thompson, Melvin Thompson, Shirley Toon, Robert Turk, Bille Usher, Sarah Webb, Glenn Whatley, Rita White, Robert White, Martha Wilkerson, Bobby Williams, Wilburn Willis, Bonita Wood.

IN HONOR OF DR. WILLIAM J. LAWHORN, UNITED STATES ARMY AIR CORPS

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Dr. William J. Lawhorn, a World War II veteran. In 1944, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps at the young age of 18.

His original intention was to become a pilot, but two weeks before he was due to enter flight school, it was shut down. Out of his squadron of 125, only eight were selected to remain in the Air Corps while the others were sent to the infantry. He went on to attend radio school and was assigned Kitchen Police duties.

World War II is known as the deadliest conflict in human history, taking the lives of over 70 million people. During this difficult time, our country stood united behind our brave servicemen and women who so willingly took to the battlefields to defend freedom and democracy. It is veterans like William that helped us emerge victorious from World War II and restore hope and humanity in a world that was shattered by the darkness of hatred and violence.

His patriotism, courage, and selflessness are examples of what make America great. Madam Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in expressing our deepest gratitude for his service to this great Nation. May God bless all those he loved, and may I convey to them my sincerest condolences and the gratitude of the American people.