

well-known to be an active member in several organizations within the Whiting community, including: the Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce, the Knights of Columbus Wives Club, the Daughters of Isabella, the Whiting-Robertsdale Historical Society, the Sacred Heart Rosary Society, and the Friends of the Library.

While Marge's everyday presence will be missed at Whiting City Hall, she will now have a chance to spend more time to those closest to her—her family. A loving wife, mother, and grandmother, Marge's commitment to her community is surpassed only by her love for her family. Marge and her loving husband, Henry, have been married for an astonishing 55 years. With Marge's retirement, they plan to spend as much time as possible with their 3 children: Nancy (Michael) Pappas, James (Martha) Drewniak, and Ron (Lisa) Drewniak, and their adoring grandchildren: Brian and Kelly Pappas and Eric and Scott Drewniak.

Madam Speaker, Marge Drewniak has selflessly given her time and efforts to the people of Whiting, Indiana, throughout her years of service. At this time, I ask that you and all of my distinguished colleagues join me in commending her for her lifetime of service and dedication, and I ask that you join me in wishing her the best of health and happiness in the years to come.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3043, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I wish to express my support of H.R. 3043, the Fiscal Year 2008 Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act.

I have increasingly heard grave concerns from Rhode Islanders about the cuts and limitations in critical domestic programs over the past 6 years. Currently, one in six Americans is without health insurance, our schools are in desperate need of resources to meet the standards set in No Child Left Behind, and the recent housing slump and credit crunch have left our economy in trouble. Our safety net programs are more important than ever, as Americans work hard to keep their families healthy and their finances in order.

This legislation takes important steps to address the problems faced by so many Americans and prioritizes funding for those programs that have suffered the most under cuts by the Republican leadership in recent years. I am proud that Democrats have crafted a bill that will increase funding for Community Health Centers and Title VII programs, designed to increase access to health services for the medically underserved. This measure will also improve education by targeting resources toward special education and Title I grants to help low-income students and by increasing the maximum Pell Grant from \$4,310

to \$4,925, making college more affordable for many students. And it rejects the President's proposed cuts for medical research at the National Institutes of Health by supplying a level of funding that will sustain existing, cutting-edge research into diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and heart disease. Finally, it provides \$2.4 billion for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program—\$250 million more than the current level—offering much-needed relief to the residents of Rhode Island, who are now facing the highest prices for home heating oil on record.

The Democratic leadership has also addressed the challenges facing our veterans by restoring accountability and oversight to ensure they receive the care they deserve. H.R. 3043 provides the biggest increase in veterans benefits in over 75 years, and the need could not be more urgent. This legislation includes an increase of \$18 billion above the current level for military construction and veterans affairs, and is also \$3.8 billion above the President's request. I am also pleased that this bill recognizes the concerns and reflects the advice of our veterans, by not only meeting, but exceeding the independent budget request, a needs estimate published by four veterans' service groups. This increase is critical to meet the needs of the many returning veterans who are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or Traumatic Brain Injury and require better care to successfully rebuild their lives. Additional funding will help alleviate the backlogged claim process and provide much-needed maintenance for VA health care facilities. The support shown by this Congress is a testament to the priority all of us place on our veterans.

In closing, I want to express my thanks to Chairman OBEY for reconciling so many diverse needs to craft a fair and fiscally responsible package, and reiterate my support for H.R. 3043.

CELEBRATING ABINGTON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL'S VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT PARTICIPATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Abington Senior High School in Abington Township, PA, on their outstanding participation in the Veteran History Project of the Library of Congress. Students and teachers have contributed their time and skills to preserving the remarkable experiences of our war veterans from all service branches, from World War I to the present day Iraq War, as well as the civilians who supported them. I am privileged to represent these students and teachers in Congress.

The Veterans History Project preserves the legacy of those who have served through the establishment of a permanent national collection, housed in the Library of Congress, of videotaped and recorded interviews, written memoirs, and wartime letters, diaries, and photographs. Stories and materials are available to anyone visiting the Library. In addition, a web page is created for each veteran who contributes an interview.

As our Nation's World War II and Korean veterans grow older, it is critical that we record their stories. Their experiences offer a priceless window into their dedication and love of country. As the daughter of a Korean War veteran, this effort has special personal meaning for me. We have much to learn from those who have served our Nation, and I wholeheartedly support this important project.

On this Veterans Day, November 12, 2007, I am proud to recognize Abington Senior High School's Veterans History Project participation at a special event, Preserving Their Stories: A Salute to Veterans History Project Volunteers, at the Hiway Theatre in Jenkintown. This special celebration will bring together Americans, both young and older, with veterans of all ages, to honor their common service to their fellow citizens and country.

Madam Speaker, once again I congratulate all of the Veterans History Project participants for their contributions to capturing the experiences of war veterans, thus honoring the lives and contributions of these extraordinary Americans.

IN HONOR OF NAVY VETERAN AND PEARL HARBOR SURVIVOR ERNAL UNDERWOOD

HON. CHRIS CANNON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, as Veteran's Day approaches, I rise in strong support of all who have ever worn the uniform. From the fields of Bunker Hill to the streets of Baghdad, and everywhere in between, American service members represent the very best of our Nation and deserve more than we can ever repay. But today I want to pay particular tribute to a resident of my district who is part of an elite club—Ernal Underwood is one of twelve Pearl Harbor survivors currently living in the State of Utah.

Mr. Underwood joined the Navy on January 7, 1941. Less than 1 year later Mr. Underwood found himself docked at Pearl Harbor on the USS *Helena*. On December 7, 1941 an aerial torpedo struck the USS *Helena* while Mr. Underwood was climbing down a ladder below the deck, on his way to write his wife a letter.

After his ship was hit, Mr. Underwood immediately ran to his battle station, picked up his weapon, and engaged the enemy. Mr. Underwood fired until his gun became too hot. After he ran to fetch a bucket of water in order to cool it down, on the way back to his station, he said he had an impression to "stop." A few seconds later fire from an enemy aircraft pelted the cement on both sides of him. Fortunately, Mr. Underwood came away unscathed. Mr. Underwood's best friend was not so lucky. Later, Ernal Underwood was asked to identify the charred body of his best friend, Benjamin Vasser. Mr. Underwood found his buddy badly burned, but alive enough to blink a response to him. That was the last time Mr. Underwood would see his friend alive.

Less than 2 years later on July 6, 1943, Ernal Underwood found himself in the middle of the Kula Gulf battle in the South Pacific. That day the USS *Helena* suffered three direct hits from enemy torpedoes. The ship broke

into three pieces and the order to abandon ship was given. Despite three broken vertebrae, a broken ankle, and a large gash in his head, Mr. Underwood treaded water through the night and into the next day before being rescued by a Navy destroyer.

Madam Speaker, it is because of heroes like Ernal Underwood that we enjoy the freedom we have today. Men who asked nothing from their country, but gave everything. We owe them more than words, medals, or honors. What we as a Nation can do to say thank you to these heroes is leave our country and our world better than we found it. I ask that my colleagues join with me in honoring Ernal Underwood and thousands of veterans like him whose sacrifice left a world freer, stronger, and more prosperous.

TRIBUTE TO BRANDI HINDS

HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a young combat veteran whose efforts in an Afghani hospital embody the characteristics of a true humanitarian.

From May 5, 2007 to September 11, 2007, Brandi Hinds served as an Emergency Medical Technician with the 455th M.D.O.S. at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan. While providing medical care in the local Afghani hospitals, Brandi noticed the day to day struggles that the Afghani people face, particularly the children. Brandi made it her mission to restore some normalcy to their lives in the midst of the chaos. Instead of writing home and asking for items that she needed, Brandi selflessly requested that friends and family members send items for the young children at the hospital. Shortly thereafter, packages began to arrive from home filled with toys and other small novelty and recreation items. Brandi's efforts brought joy to the many children she encountered. After her departure, Air Force Chaplain CPT Terri Gast continues to distribute the gifts to the Afghani children. What began as the desire of one individual to make a small difference has grown into a program fittingly named "Brandi's Kids."

Brandi's service and sacrifice has inspired the many whose lives she has touched. Today, Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to recognize Brandi's tireless dedication to the children of Afghanistan and thank her for her service to our great Nation.

TRIBUTE TO CLAYTON ANDERSON

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, today, Wednesday, November 7, 2007, astronaut Clayton Anderson will touch down at Kennedy Space Center aboard the Space Shuttle *Discovery*. Clayton, a native of Ashland, NE, returns home after spending 5 months in space aboard the International Space Station.

I had the distinct honor of having a brief telephone conversation with Clay during his

time aboard the International Space Station. It was truly an experience I will remember for the rest of my life.

Born in Omaha, Clayton received his bachelor of science degree in physics from Hastings College, Nebraska in 1981 and a master of science degree in aerospace engineering from Iowa State University in 1983. He joined the Johnson Space Center in 1983 and was selected as a mission specialist by NASA in June 1998. He launched to the Space Station on June 8, 2007 aboard Space Shuttle *Atlantis* with the crew of STS-117 and was assigned as Expedition 15 flight engineer.

Nebraskans from Omaha to Scottsbluff are proud of Clayton and all he has accomplished. He is an inspiration to all who wish to pursue their own goals—whether of one day traveling to and exploring space, teaching the next generation of students, or simply being the best person they can be.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3043, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, today the House will vote on a conference report which includes the 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill and the 2008 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill. I rise in support of this legislation because I believe that this legislation will fund programs families in the 15th District need and rely on—quality education, strong health care, jobs that are safe for its workers and secure retirement plans.

I am disappointed that the President has threatened to veto this legislation. I find it extremely irresponsible that he finds it acceptable to fund another \$200 billion for the war in Iraq, but has issue with an increase of \$9.8 billion for education, health and workforce programs and an increase of \$4 billion for veterans' health care.

Specifically this legislation will:

Provide \$37.2 billion to VA hospitals and clinics, and traumatic brain injury and post traumatic stress disorder research, over \$2.6 billion more than the President requested.

Invest \$124.2 million into VA claims processors to address the backlog of 400,000 benefit claims.

Increase education funding to \$60.7 billion, funding that will be dedicated to Title I grants to help low-income children, teacher quality and after school programs, IDEA grants and Pell grants.

Dedicate \$12 billion to dislocated worker training, Job Corps, and worker protection efforts at the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the National Institutes for Occupational Safety and Health.

Through this legislation we will fund all these programs, while only spending enough money equal to the cost of 2 months in Iraq. Let me be clear that it is not the goal of this

Congress to withhold funding for our troops; however, it is important that Congress give this administration the message that our domestic programs should not be forgotten at the expense of a poorly handled and mismanaged war in Iraq.

Madam Speaker, the annual appropriations process is never easy, but this Congress we have an opportunity to pass a good piece of legislation that is also fiscally responsible. As Members of Congress, it is our duty to our constituents to fund programs that will improve their quality of life, which is why I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from the House chamber for rollcall vote 1044. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING GEVORK ARZOUMANIAN A SURVIVOR OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Gevork Arzoumanian, a resident of Glendale, California and a survivor of the Armenian Genocide. Mr. Arzoumanian was born in 1907 in the village of Sulduz, modern day Naghadeh, northwest Iran, bordering the Republic of Turkey.

The children's cries and the groans of the elderly still haunt Gevork today, 92 years after the atrocities. His lips quiver and his hands shake when he retells those bitter memories to his grandchildren.

Once the Ottoman forces had begun their massacres and deportation of the area's Christian Armenians and Assyrians, Gevork's family marched toward the village of Rezaie (Orumieh province) leaving behind their home and cotton farm. Along the way, Gevork witnessed the murders of his father (Arzouman), mother (Arplik), sisters (Asdghik and Satenik) and brother (Ashod). As a young boy, Gevork also witnessed the pillage of people's houses, the stealing of young girls and the horrible game of Ottoman Turkish soldiers throwing infants in the air and catching them with their swords. Those who survived the brutality ended up in the city of Hamadan, Iran and were divided into two groups; one would be headed to Beirut and the other to Tehran. Gevork was in the latter. He was taken to the St. George Church, temporarily cared for by an Armenian couple, who later sent him to the city of Babol by the Caspian Sea, where he was cared for by Mr. Garegin and Verjin Harotoonian. He later became a truck driver.

Mr. Arzoumanian has lived through an incredibly difficult period in history. Nevertheless, he worked hard and persevered. In 1940, Gevork married Laura and had two children, a