

In 1962, he was selected for a 5-year tour of active duty with the General Staff at the Pentagon, where he became Chief of the Army Intelligence Reserve Office. And as the United States engaged in another military conflict in Vietnam, he again heeded the call to service in 1967. After his tour, he was a military intelligence research analyst at the U.S. Army Institute of Land Combat. In 1970, Col. Lenard retired after 30 years of distinguished military service.

Col. Lenard gained numerous recognitions and awards during his extensive military career including: the Silver Star Medal with Cluster, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Bronze Star Medal with "V" for Valor, the French Croix de Guerre with Palm, seven overseas campaign ribbons (Algeria-French Morocco, Tunisia, Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes-Alsace and Rhineland) and numerous other, citations, the last being the Normandy Medal of the Jubilee of Liberty.

Upon retirement from the military, he became the first executive director of the Polish-American Congress, Washington D.C. Office. After leaving that office in 1974, he became Project Manager of the U.S. Bicentennial Ethnic Racial Council. He organized nationwide conferences and coordinated local and national U.S. Bicentennial activities, providing many opportunities for Polonia participation.

Together, with his wife Myra, Col. Lenard worked on many initiatives to support Polish independence, as the country once again suffered under the pervasive influence of its Soviet neighbor. He administered millions of dollars in grants at The National Endowment for Democracy through the Polish American Congress Charitable Foundation to support the budding Polish underground: Solidarity. He helped provide to Citizens' Committees with urgently needed technical resources and finances. Col. and Mrs. Lenard lead the march toward supporting Poland's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Col. Lenard served on the Board of Directors of the American Red Cross. Moreover, Col. Lenard was well-known for his advocacy of close relations between Poles and Jews, the two groups that suffered the most under German-Nazi rule.

For his work with the Polish-American Community, the Polish-American Congress and the bitterness of Poland's position in the world, Colonel Lenard and his wife Myra, either jointly or as individuals, received many awards. These included the following: the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland with Star, Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland, Polish Cavalry saber with inscription "For Your Freedom and Ours From The Grateful Nation of Poland," the Polish-National Alliance's "Gold Cross Legion of Honor," the Polish Apostolate "Pride of Polish American Community Award, the Founders Award and the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

Myra Lenard passed from this life on May 1, 2000, later to be joined with her husband. They are survived by their three children: George, Antoinette and Elizabeth as well as their grandson Jeffrey Lenard.

The Polish-American Congress Medal of Freedom was awarded to Col. Lenard on December 7, 2007. Since he was unable to obtain his award and the gratitude of Polish-

Americans in person, it is a fitting to conclude this record of a remarkable man with the acceptance speech he wrote, but could not make upon receipt of this honor:

Merry Christmas to all of my dear friends. This is the first time in many years that I will not be able to share with you the wonderful holiday celebration we all look forward to that is sponsored by the Washington office of the Polish-American Congress.

Nonetheless, I am with you in spirit. I cherish the memories of our long association together, our common struggles in favor of a free and democratic Poland and in favor of Polish-American culture and the values that we all share."

TRIBUTE TO U.S. AIR FORCE
STAFF SERGEANT ALEJANDRO
AYALA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a hero from my congressional district, U.S. Air Force SSgt Alejandro Ayala. Today, I ask that the House of Representatives honor and remember this incredible young man who died in service to his country.

Alejandro had a lifelong fascination with the military. He attended Arlington High School in Riverside, CA, and joined the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. Immediately after his graduation in 1999, Alejandro joined the United States Air Force. Alejandro Ayala attended basic training at Lackland Air Force Base and then was assigned to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina, where he met his wife Megan, whom he married in 2003. Alejandro was subsequently assigned to the 90th Logistics Readiness Squadron at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming. On Sunday, November 18, 2007, Alejandro died of injuries he received from a vehicle accident in Kuwait while serving with forces fighting in Iraq. He was 26 years old.

In reading about Alejandro's life, I was impressed by his devotion to family and the military. Alejandro's brother Cesar describes Alejandro as his inspiration for joining the U.S. Marine Corps. Alejandro is survived by his wife Megan; two young children, Alexandra and Matthew; parents Faustino and Ilda; twin sister Liset; sister Angelica; and brothers, Cesar and Francisco.

As we look at the incredibly rich military history of our country we realize that this history is comprised of men, just like Alejandro, who bravely fought for the ideals of freedom and democracy. Each story is unique and humbling for those of us who, far from the dangers they have faced, live our lives in relative comfort and ease. The day the Ayala family had to lay Alejandro to rest was probably the most difficult moment the family has ever faced and my thoughts, prayers and deepest gratitude for their sacrifice go out to them. There are no words that can relieve their pain and what words I offer only begin to convey my deep respect and highest appreciation.

Staff Sergeant Ayala's wife, children, mother, father, sisters, brothers and all his relatives have given a part of themselves in the loss of their loved one. I hope they know that the goodness Alejandro brought to the world and

the sacrifice he has made will always be remembered.

TRIBUTE TO 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE SANDHILLS STOCK SHOW
AND RODEO

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the SandHills Stock Show and Rodeo on its 75th anniversary. Since 1932, the SandHills Rodeo has had an invaluable impact on the economy and heritage of West Texas.

From its beginnings as the first "Pure Hereford" Show in Texas in 1932 to the present-day exposition—including the horse show, stock show, and rodeo—the SandHills Rodeo has generated millions of dollars in revenue for the Permian Basin and has attracted thousands of visitors from across the country. Like the City of Odessa itself, the SandHills Stock Show and Rodeo has grown and flourished over the past 75 years and has become as much a part of Texas as the cowboys themselves.

Growing up in Odessa, I attended the rodeo and marveled at the brave cowboys on their bucking broncos and the fine animals that compete in the Stock and Horse shows. From the crowning of Miss SandHills Rodeo to the always exciting (at least for the parents) Boot Scramble, the rodeo has something for everyone. I am pleased that West Texans of all generations continue to enjoy this unique and exciting event. Congratulations to all of those who have made the SandHills Stock Show and Rodeo such a fine Texas tradition!

TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF
STAFF SERGEANT. SHANE BECKER

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of SSG Shane Becker.

Mr. Becker served in the United States Army as a staff Sergeant. in the 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

Mr. Becker courageously died in combat on April 3, 2007, in Baghdad. I believe his service and commitment to our country most worthy of being recognized by this great legislative body.

Shane Becker was born October 12, 1971, and graduated from Greeley West High School in 1990. Becker joined the Army in 1993 and was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. In 2006, Becker transferred from Fort Hood to Fort Richardson in Alaska.

Mr. Becker was a decorated war hero who received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and the Overseas Service Medal.

Becker is survived by his wife Crystal and daughters Cierra and Cheyenna; his mother and stepfather, Deborah and Bob Jorgensen, his father and stepmother, Joe and Jean Becker; sister Brooke Jorgensen; stepsister Nichole Becker; and stepbrothers Chris Becker, Adam Becker, Matt Jorgensen and Chris Jorgensen.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful for Mr. Becker's selfless service to our Nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing a man worthy of our honor, Mr. Shane Becker.

VETERANS GUARANTEED BONUS
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 17, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3793, the Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act. I am proud to cosponsor this important, bipartisan legislation which will ensure that members of the Armed Services who are discharged as a result of combat-related wounds receive the full compensation to which they are entitled.

H.R. 3793 was prompted by the recommendations of the Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors, co-chaired by former Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala. It will reverse a Department of Defense rule that unfairly penalizes wounded soldiers and prohibits them from receiving their full enlistment bonuses.

While facing the threat of a hostile enemy, our veterans have too often returned home to find more trouble: gaps in health care services, limited educational assistance, problems finding employment and a lack of support for their families. Too often, our brave military men and women find that while they have been willing to serve their country, their country is not ready to serve them. We can take an important step in reversing that trend by ensuring that veterans receive all the pay for which they are entitled.

According to Department of Defense rules, enlistees cannot receive their full enlistment bonus unless they fulfill their entire military obligation. Unfortunately, members of the Armed Services who are wounded while on active duty are not receiving their full bonuses because their service was prematurely cut short. The Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act will correct this problem by requiring the Department of Defense to provide veterans who have been discharged due to combat-related wounds with full payment of remaining bonuses within 30 days of discharge. This will ensure that America's wounded warriors receive the full compensation promised to them.

These wounded veterans have earned their bonuses by answering the call to service. Now is the time to heed the recommendation of the Dole-Shalala Commission and fix this problem.

I would like to thank Congressman JASON ALTMIRE for introducing this legislation and Chairman BOB FILNER for prioritizing the health and well-being of the Nation's veterans.

RECOGNIZING MATTHEW J. ROBERTS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew J. Roberts, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew J. Roberts for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

WILDLAND FIRE SAFETY AND
TRANSPARENCY ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to promote wildland firefighter safety and facilitate agency and congressional oversight of the Federal agencies' wildland firefighter safety practices and policies.

The legislation is identical to a bill introduced by Senator CANTWELL and cosponsored by my Colorado colleague, Senator KEN SALAZAR. That measure (S. 1152) has been favorably reported from the Senate's Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and I am introducing a House companion to assist in securing enactment of the legislation.

The bill would require Interior Department agencies and the Forest Service to provide Congress with an annual joint report on their wildland firefighter safety practices, including training programs and activities for wildland fire suppression, prescribed burning, and wildland fire use.

This will encourage greater focus in the agencies and can assist in our oversight of these important agency activities.

Ensuring timely and sufficient information on the agencies' safety practices and policies is critical to such oversight. For example, the Federal agencies currently do not specifically track the portion of their wildfire-related funding that is expended for wildland firefighter safety and training, making oversight of safety program funding difficult.

Madam Speaker, wildland firefighting has long been a dangerous activity, as shown by a report from the National Wildfire Coordinating Group listing 945 fatalities resulting from wildland fire accidents since 1910. And while evidently from 1910 until the late 1970s and early 1980s, the number of Federal wildland fire fatalities was trending downward, but that trend has reversed, with the number

of Federal fatalities slowly increasing since then.

This disturbing trend reflects the fact that in recent years wildfire behavior has become more extreme, the wildland-urban interface has grown rapidly, and the number and size of wildfires has increased significantly. Despite improvements in wildfire fighting technologies, these and other factors combine to make wildland firefighting more complex today than ever before.

The 1994 deaths of fourteen Forest Service firefighters on Storm King Mountain in Garfield County, Colorado, followed by four more deaths in the Thirtymile Fire in 2001, two in the Cramer Fire in 2003, five in the Esperanza Fire in 2006, and many others, particularly highlight the need for continual improvement in and oversight of safety policies and practices.

A number of recent reports have identified serious concerns with the agencies' safety practices. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration found "serious and willful" violations of safety standards by the Forest Service in its investigation of Thirtymile Fire fatalities, noting that a number of them were similar to failures which occurred at the Storm King Mountain fire. It also found willful, serious and repeated violations of safety regulations during its investigation of the Cramer Fire.

The agencies' growing reliance on contract wildfire fighting crews also has presented safety challenges. A report by the Department of Agriculture's Office of Inspector General (Report No. 08601-42-SF, March 2006) identified significant problems with oversight and administration of the Forest Service contracts and agreements for these private crews. The report's "findings confirm the need to address serious control weaknesses with respect to the firefighting contract crews," which led the Inspector General to recommend, among other things, improving oversight of contract crews' qualifications and training.

These and other reports highlight the need for Congress and the Federal agencies to improve oversight in the area of wildfire safety. The agencies indicated at a recent Committee oversight hearing on wildfire that they are working on making some major changes to their training and other safety programs, which further highlights the need for Congress to keep abreast of the agencies' wildfire safety program.

This legislation is intended to assist in that effort, and I think it deserves the support of all our colleagues.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
TO CODIFY TITLE 51, U.S. CODE

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, Ranking Member LAMAR SMITH and I are introducing a bill to codify into positive law as title 51, United States Code, certain general and permanent laws related to national and commercial space programs. It was prepared by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel as part of its functions under 2 U.S.C. 285(b).

This bill is the successor to H.R. 3039, introduced in the 109th Congress. It has been updated to include provisions enacted after the