

RECOGNIZING DOUGLAS McLAIN
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Douglas McLain, 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, Troop 351, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Douglas has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Douglas 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 Douglas McLain for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Douglas in the United States House of Representatives.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS
DISABILITY COMPENSATION
AUTOMATIC COLA ACT

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing an important piece of legislation that speaks to our commitment to our Nation's veterans.

In the 109th Congress, I introduced the Veterans Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act. This legislation would automatically increase disability benefits for veterans, each year, by the Consumer Price Index. Today I am re-introducing this important legislation.

Currently, it takes a yearly act by Congress to ensure disabled veterans receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). While we have done this every year for the past three decades we cannot guarantee that future Congresses will act as responsibly. Taking a chance on disabled veterans' benefits is a chance I am not willing to take.

My legislation would simply make the COLA for veterans with disability benefits automatic each year. Furthermore, this important legislation also has no budgetary impact. In fact, both Congress and the President assume the increase in their budgets.

Madam Speaker, Social Security and Medicare beneficiaries receive an automatic COLA and our disabled veterans deserve the same. Thank you.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMIS-
SION RECOMMENDATIONS ACT
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1. This bill takes an important long-overdue step to implement recommendations put forth by the 9/11 Commission. This bill improves interoperability, enhances cargo and overall port security, and strengthens U.S. efforts to reduce the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

I do recommend that implementation of this bill be undertaken in such a way as to ensure that our rural first responders do not receive less funding as a result of the redistribution of the homeland security grants in the legislation. First responders across the Nation must be equipped to readily deal with and react to security concerns in the United States. Therefore, I think it is critical that North Dakota's first responders continue to receive the funding that they need and deserve to do their job.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMIS-
SION RECOMMENDATIONS ACT
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to revise and extend my remarks with regard to the vote on H.R. 1—Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007.

While I certainly support the goal of this legislation and believe it to be imperative that Congress continue to work with the Administration to ensure the safety and security of our Nation, I could not in good conscience vote in favor of the measure as it was presented. I agree there is still work to be done and it would benefit this Congress to discuss the continued implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission; however, I believe H.R. 1 contained some critical flaws that prevent it from being a solution to the security dilemmas that we face today.

First and foremost, I believe this legislation is fiscally irresponsible. Not only does it create new government spending without providing any offsets, it essentially provides a blank check for these unfunded mandates by authorizing "such sums as may be necessary" for an unspecified number of years. Providing effective and common sense security measures is essential; however we cannot do so at the expense of fiscal responsibility and subject our Nation to higher government spending and a greater Federal deficit.

Beyond being fiscally irresponsible, I had concerns about the manner in which this legislation was considered. Decisions on matters as grave and enduring as the security and safety of this Nation should not be undertaken

hastily or impulsively and should not subvert the normal legislative process. This legislation was not afforded the opportunity to traverse the regular order and be debated on, amended, or considered during the committee process. Further, as no amendments were allowed, it cannot be said that the proposal received a fair and open debate.

Further, the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act contains a provision expressing the Sense of Congress that the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) should be authorized by the United Nations. I believe it presents a dangerous situation to allow the UN control over such an important program which restricts the transfer of banned weapons and technology, given that the UN membership includes some of the nations responsible for the violations that PSI seeks to prevent.

Finally, I am opposed to the provision that extends collective bargaining guarantees to the employees of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). It is important to remember this is an idea that was explored during the creation of the TSA as the Homeland Security Act of 2002 was considered and at that time, it was determined it was not in the best interest of the organization and its mission. Unionizing TSA employees would tie the hands of the agency and disallow it the flexibility to deploy its workforce and change the nature of employees' work and locations in response to national emergencies.

Again, I want to emphasize for the record that I recognize the critical and serious nature of the business of protecting and securing our Nation and its citizens. However, as previously explained, I could not in good conscience vote for legislation that I do not believe to be an effective or responsible means in which to address these important issues.

RECOGNIZING TYLER SANDOVAL
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tyler Sandoval, 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, Troop 495, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Tyler has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Tyler 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 Tyler Sandoval for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Tyler in the United States House of Representatives.

IN HONOR OF MRS. PHYLLIS
MILLER

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mrs. Phyllis Miller upon receiving the Zella Butler Bronfman Award, presented by the UJA-Federation's Task Force on People With Disabilities and the J.E. and Z.B. Butler Foundation.

Throughout her 25-year career, Phyllis Miller has worked tirelessly on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. She taught Judaic studies and Hebrew language to both special and regular education elementary school students, beginning in 1973 at the Armed Forces Center for English as a Second Language in Fort Knox, Kentucky. She later taught at Temple Beth El Hebrew School in Springfield, Massachusetts; Hillel Academy in Passaic, New Jersey; and Yeshiva of North Jersey in River Edge, New Jersey.

In 1997, Mrs. Miller took a position as a Family and Child Advocate at the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, which she represents on the UJA Task Force on Disabilities. In this capacity, she assists people with special needs and their families in finding the programs and schools that best serve them. She also coordinates the Association of Jewish Special Educators and the Jewish Parent Advocate Coalition, through which she arranges in-service workshops for teachers and an annual Parent Empowerment Conference and Resource Fair for parents and social service providers. She also acts as the liaison to social service agencies and to families searching for special needs services.

A graduate of Stern College at Yeshiva University with a degree in Psychology and Judaic Studies, Mrs. Miller has five wonderful children, one of whom is currently studying at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Phyllis and her husband, Michael, have done tremendous work in forging relationships within Jewish communities both here and in Israel.

I am pleased to honor Mrs. Phyllis Miller for her many years of outstanding service, and to thank her for her extraordinary dedication to the developmentally disabled.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF PRESIDENT GERALD RUDOLPH FORD

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of the resolution honoring the life of former President Gerald R. Ford.

Gerald Ford served America with great distinction—first in the military, then as a Member of the U.S. House, and later as Vice President and President of the United States. After faithfully serving his Michigan constituents for 25 years in the House, he was called to serve all of the American people in the White House when his country needed him most.

The Watergate crisis was one of the most difficult times in our nation's history, and Presi-

dent Ford's unflinching leadership helped heal a nation and restore the American people's faith in their government. His decision to pardon President Nixon was a controversial and difficult move that drew a great deal of criticism. But in hindsight, I think most Americans would agree it was the right decision, the honorable decision, and reflected President Ford's good judgment and straightforward approach.

Throughout the ordeal, President Ford earned our affection and respect. He will be remembered for the integrity, character, and grace he exhibited in his work and throughout his life.

As public servants we owe a huge debt to those who have served before us, and we owe President Ford a debt of gratitude for the enormous contributions and sacrifices he made on behalf of his country. I am humbled to serve in the same elected leadership post he occupied for eight years during his tenure in the House.

Our thoughts and prayers, and those of a grateful nation, are with Betty and the Ford family. I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

RECOGNIZING JACOB KLINGEN- SMITH FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacob Klingensmith, 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, Troop 100, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacob has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Jacob 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 Jacob Klingensmith for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Jacob in the United States House of Representatives.

IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESI- DENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF 20,000 NEW TROOPS TO IRAQ

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, last night the President announced to the Nation his intention to deploy another 20,000 troops to Iraq.

Madam Speaker, troop surges in Iraq are not new and, judging from history, the one announced last night by the President will not work. It will only succeed in putting more American troops in harm's way for no good

reason and without any strategic advantage. The armed forces of the United States are not to be used to respond to 911 calls from governments like Iraq's that have done all they can to take responsibility for the security of their country and safety of their own people. The United States cannot do for Iraq what Iraqis are not willing to do for themselves.

Troop surges have been tried several times in the past. The success of these surges has, to put it charitably, been underwhelming. Let's briefly review the record:

1. Operation Together Forward, (June–October 2006): In June the Bush administration announced a new plan for securing Baghdad by increasing the presence of Iraqi Security Forces. That plan failed, so in July the White House announced that additional American troops would be sent into Baghdad. By October, a U.S. military spokesman, Gen. William Caldwell, acknowledged that the operation and troop increase was a failure and had “not met our overall expectations of sustaining a reduction in the levels of violence.” [CNN, 12/19/06. Washington Post, 7/26/06. Brookings Institution, 12/21/06.]

2. Elections and Constitutional Referendum (September–December 2005): In the fall of 2005 the Bush administration increased troop levels by 22,000, making a total of 160,000 American troops in Iraq around the constitutional referendum and parliamentary elections. While the elections went off without major violence these escalations had little long-term impact on quelling sectarian violence or attacks on American troops. [Brookings Institution, 12/21/06. www.icasualties.org]

3. Constitutional Elections and Fallujah (November 2004–March 2005): As part of an effort to improve counterinsurgency operations after the Fallujah offensive in November 2004 and to increase security before the January 2005 constitutional elections U.S. forces were increased by 12,000 to 150,000. Again there was no long-term security impact. [Brookings Institution, 12/21/06. New York Times, 12/2/04.]

4. Massive Troop Rotations (December 2003–April 2004): As part of a massive rotation of 250,000 troops in the winter and spring of 2004, troop levels in Iraq were raised from 122,000 to 137,000. Yet, the increase did nothing to prevent Muqtada al-Sadr's Najaf uprising and April of 2004 was the second deadliest month for American forces. [Brookings Institution, 12/21/06. www.icasualties.org. USA Today, 3/4/04]

Madam Speaker, rather than surging militarily for the third time in a year, the president should surge diplomatically. A further military escalation would simply mean repeating a failed strategy. A diplomatic surge would involve appointing an individual with the stature of a former secretary of state, such as Colin Powell or Madeleine Albright, as a special envoy. This person would be charged with getting all six of Iraq's neighbors—Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait—involved more constructively in stabilizing Iraq. These countries are already involved in a bilateral, self-interested and disorganized way.

While their interests and ours are not identical, none of these countries wants to live with an Iraq that, after our redeployment, becomes a failed state or a humanitarian catastrophe that could become a haven for terrorists or a hemorrhage of millions more refugees streaming into their countries.