

offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 738.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### 25 BY 25 RESOLUTION

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 25) expressing the sense of Congress that it is the goal of the United States that, not later than January 1, 2025, the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States should provide from renewable resources not less than 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States and continue to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed, and fiber.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

##### H. CON. RES. 25

Whereas the United States has a quantity of renewable energy resources that is sufficient to supply a significant portion of the energy needs of the United States;

Whereas the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States can help ensure a sustainable domestic energy system;

Whereas accelerated development and use of renewable energy technologies provide numerous benefits to the United States, including improved national security, improved balance of payments, healthier rural economies, improved environmental quality, and abundant, reliable, and affordable energy for all citizens of the United States;

Whereas the production of transportation fuels from renewable energy would help the United States meet rapidly growing domestic and global energy demands, reduce the dependence of the United States on energy imported from volatile regions of the world that are politically unstable, stabilize the cost and availability of energy, and safeguard the economy and security of the United States;

Whereas increased energy production from domestic renewable resources would attract substantial new investments in energy infrastructure, create economic growth, develop new jobs for the citizens of the United States, and increase the income for farm, ranch, and forestry jobs in the rural regions of the United States;

Whereas increased use of renewable energy is practical and can be cost effective with the implementation of supportive policies and proper incentives to stimulate markets and infrastructure; and

Whereas public policies aimed at enhancing renewable energy production and accelerating technological improvements will further reduce energy costs over time and increase market demand: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),* That it is the sense of Congress that it is the goal of the United States that, not later than January 1, 2025, the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States should provide from renewable resources not less than 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States and continue to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed, and fiber.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 25, and urge its adoption by the House. H. Con. Res. 25 embodies the vision of farmers and ranchers who have been leaders in renewable energy and land conservation activities, and recognizes that forestry and agriculture will play a leading role in our country's transitions to energy independence. The 25x'25 Resolution sets a national energy independence goal that by the year 2025, 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States should come from homegrown, renewable sources.

This resolution has received strong bipartisan support, was passed out of the House Agriculture Committee under my good friend, Mr. GOODLATTE's leadership last year, and again in May under the new Congress. The 25x'25 Resolution has been carefully crafted to set national renewable energy production targets, while allowing farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs and industry the flexibility needed to reach these important goals.

Madam Speaker, the new face of energy security and rural development is in the form of a biofuels plant, a gasifier, a windmill, a methane digester or any other technology that will reduce dependence on foreign energy sources. In times of high energy prices, I can think of no one better to supply the United States with a renewable source of energy than the same American farmers and ranchers who have provided the United States and the world with an abundance of safe food and fiber.

Expanding the production and the use of renewable energy is an important priority, not just for agriculture, but for the entire country in our pursuit of energy independence. The 25x'25 Coalition has grown over the past several years, and now includes endorsements from more than 590 business, conservation, agriculture and forestry organizations. As renewable energy use continues to expand, new innovations, including the promising growth of cellulosic ethanol, will not only provide for our energy needs; they will also produce environmental and conservation benefits.

I think the future of energy production from agriculture and forestry is

the most exciting thing that has happened in rural America in my lifetime. The 25x'25 Resolution states our commitment to support the development of renewable energy sources. I believe we can not only meet but exceed the goal of 25 percent by the year 2025.

But every journey starts with a first step, and this resolution is a very important first step that we can take in achieving this energy independence.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their support and again urge the support of the House for the passage of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would first like to thank the gentleman from Minnesota, the chairman of the committee, for his leadership in bringing this resolution before the Congress again, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. HOLDEN, for his involvement in this as well.

The resolution, also known as 25x'25, recognizes the importance of agriculture in meeting our energy needs and sets a noble goal for American agriculture: to produce 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States from the renewable resources of our agriculture, forestry and working lands by the year 2025.

We have made significant progress in developing a robust industry using agricultural crops as well as animal waste to produce ethanol and biodiesel. In 2006 alone, the renewable fuels industry added more than 1.05 billion gallons of new ethanol to the marketplace. It is projected that without any new technological breakthroughs, the industry already has the potential to produce more than 11 billion gallons per year within the next decade.

While the domestic production of energy has been exciting, there are still many renewable energy sources yet to be explored and developed. There are a wide variety of agricultural products and by-products that can be converted to clean, renewable energy sources. In fact, there are sources of renewable energy in every one of our 50 States, including wind, solar, hydropower and biomass. The development of cellulosic technology has enormous potential to bolster the renewable fuel market inside the corn belt and well beyond.

I am particularly excited about the opportunity to use forest biomass as a component of our renewable energy supply. Forest biomass is plentiful and available in many States. Almost two-thirds of the Commonwealth of Virginia is forested, as is much of the southeastern United States. In fact, today we have roughly the same amount of forest land as we had 100 years ago. Trees are an abundant resource and are available for conversion into both wood products and biofuels year-round.

Every year we grow almost twice as much forest biomass as we harvest.

This wood and wood waste has the potential to produce enough electricity to power 43 million households, or enough ethanol to increase our domestic supply by almost 10-fold. As we find more ways to use forest biomass in our energy supply, we also have the opportunity to improve forest health, removing materials that fuel wildfires and insect and disease infestations.

Renewable energy development can create valuable markets for many of the waste materials which are currently a burden on America's farmers, such as animal waste, harvest by-products and damaged crops. Farmers continue to face steep environmental regulations in handling animal waste, and converting this waste into renewable fuels is a win-win for farmers and the environment. In fact, I would like to see the word "waste" taken out of American agriculture since almost everything produced on our farms can be used or reused for some other purpose.

The current tax credits and renewable fuels standard, along with the phaseout of MTBE, has helped fuel investment in new ethanol and biodiesel plants, and created more markets for agriculture products. It is obvious that current policies have successfully established a thriving, renewable fuels market. We should now focus on policy that will develop commercial cellulosic ethanol and allow new markets to drive production.

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New proposed initiatives are extremely ambitious and can only be achieved with contributions from all areas of the agriculture sector, including grains, plants, trees and wood waste, vegetable oil, and animal fat and waste.

The 2002 farm bill included the first-ever energy title with programs to help renewable fuel producers purchase and expand operations and purchase feedstocks and also established programs to make grants and loans to farmers, ranchers and small businesses to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements on farming operations.

The energy title of the House's 2007 farm bill builds on the 2002 bill by providing nearly \$3 billion to promote the commercial production of cellulosic ethanol. These initiatives will help farmers and forest owners by creating new markets and income opportunities to keep them on the land and keep their land working. At the same time, greater focus on cellulosic feedstocks can reduce our reliance on corn for renewable fuels.

Increased development of renewable energy opens new markets for our Nation's producer; provides consumers with a safe, sustainable, environmentally friendly and renewable source of energy; and decreases our Nation's dependency on foreign oil.

25x'25 is a vision we can all get behind, as 600 groups already have, including agriculture and forestry

groups, as well as business and environmental organizations. Over 20 of our Nation's Governors, along with 72 bipartisan cosponsors in the House, have recognized that this is a goal, though challenging, that is worth striving for.

I encourage my colleagues to join us in recognizing the important role American agriculture plays in domestic energy production and work with us to turn the goal of 25x'25 into a reality.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOLDEN), the chairman of the Conservation, Credit, Energy, and Research Subcommittee.

Mr. HOLDEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time and thank him for his leadership and that of Mr. GOODLATTE, leadership in his role as ranking member and former chairman of the committee, on this very important issue.

Madam Speaker, we have an energy crisis in this country, and we need to take advantage of our own natural resources. This piece of legislation before us today is going to address the resources under our jurisdiction as members of the Ag Committee, but I would be negligent as a proud son of the coal regions of Pennsylvania, the anthracite coal fields, if I didn't mention that I hope that future pieces of legislation that come before this body also address the opportunity of coal-to-liquid, how we need to take advantage of the vast resources that we have in coal in this country.

I would say to those who criticize the environmental aspects of coal-to-liquid to just come to my home in St. Clair, Pennsylvania, in Schuylkill County and look at 200-to 300-foot comb banks, waste coal, that can be cleaned up and made into liquid fuel. So I hope in future proceedings before this House we're able to address that.

But I stand here proudly as a member of the Ag Committee and chairman of the Energy Subcommittee, in cooperation with my chairman and ranking member, to support this legislation.

As was mentioned by the chairman and the ranking member, we have an abundance of agriculture resources that we need to take advantage of in this country; and if we do not, we will remain to be dependent on the smooth, continuous flow of oil out of the Persian Gulf and Mexico and Venezuela. We have an opportunity to do something beginning today.

As we were writing the 2007 Ag bill, members of my subcommittee, we traveled to Penn State, to NC State, to the USDA labs and looked at the research that is being done on cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel; and when you look at the possibilities of the entire country, not one region excluding another, having the ability to participate in a move towards energy independence, when we look at cellulosic ethanol or biodiesel in the feedstocks that are so abundant,

it's absolutely imperative that we take advantage of those and pass this legislation today.

As the ranking member mentioned, in the energy title we have in excess of a \$2 billion loan guarantee program to help this infant industry take hold and allow the people on Wall Street, the investors, the private sector to be partners with the government as we move this forward.

So, Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation and urge its adoption.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KAGEN), a new member of our committee who has been a leader on this issue as well as many others.

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman PETERSON and thank Ranking Member GOODLATTE for allowing me to participate on a bipartisan committee, a committee whose example should be followed by the remainder of this Chamber. It has been a great pleasure for me to participate on this Agriculture Committee.

My home State of Wisconsin has been a leader on this issue of renewable energy. Why? Because we need an energy policy today that is not put together behind closed doors but out in the open, in a committee forum and here on the House floor.

Wisconsin has established its own renewable energy standard of 10 percent renewable by 2015, and judging by today's oil price that may reach \$85 per barrel, it can't come too soon.

This resolution of 25x'25, which I'm a proud cosponsor of, indicates our Nation's desire to become energy independent. By declaring our intent to provide 25 percent of our Nation's energy from renewable sources by 2025, we're taking a critical step in securing the energy and environmental needs of our future generations.

As a member of the Ag Committee, I know the potential of our farms, the potential of our forests, especially in northern Wisconsin, and the potential of our working lands across the country. If we achieve the goals outlined in this resolution, we will not only provide for our Nation's energy requirements, but we'll also develop innovative industries and supply countless numbers of new jobs in this developing field of renewable energy and at the same time will continue to guarantee that we will all serve our Nation well as a leader in the world.

Madam Speaker, it is no surprise today that we need a new energy policy, and this is a great start to a great new beginning.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I am now pleased to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlelady from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN) who has been a leader on renewable energy in her State and in the country for a long time.

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for yielding.

I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 25, commonly referred to by my constituents, and it sounds like the constituents of many others, as 25x'25. I'm an original cosponsor of this resolution, and I commend Chairman PETERSON and Ranking Member GOODLATTE for their superb leadership on advancing this important resolution, on the overall issue of advancing renewable energy in American agriculture, and for their efforts in bringing this legislation to the floor today.

This resolution is as bold as it is straightforward. It simply states the United States expects our Nation's agricultural, forestry and working land to provide from renewable resources and sustainable resources not less than 25 percent of total U.S. energy consumption by 2025, while continuing to produce the world's safest, most abundant, most affordable food and feed. This goal is both exciting and achievable, and rural America stands ready to assume the challenge. Today's resolution compels us as a Nation to consider, to devise, and to implement a strategy for realizing this critical goal.

In recent years, we've taken important incremental steps in support of renewable energy. The most significant and positive example of this commitment was the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which contained the first-ever renewable fuel standard, long advocated by Chairman PETERSON and many others in this Chamber and in the Senate, a national mandate for the usage of renewable energy; and it has been a resounding success.

In 2004, we produced less than 3.5 billion gallons of ethanol in the United States. By the end of this calendar year, we'll have the capacity to produce more than 7 billion gallons of clean, renewable, domestically grown ethanol in this country.

This forward-looking and innovative policy has enabled the U.S. ethanol industry to more than double its production capacity in only 3 years; and the benefits to the economy, to consumers and to the environment have been tremendous; and as the ranking member noted, with the advancements in cellulosic ethanol, every region of the country will soon benefit as so many States have already done.

According to a recent study by LECG, a global expert services firm, the combination of spending for annual operations, ethanol transportation and capital spending for new plants under construction added \$41.9 billion of gross output to the American economy in 2006 alone, over \$1 billion of that in my home State of South Dakota. Even more important, much of this economic benefit has been realized by small communities in rural areas that have faced considerable economic challenges in recent decades.

Moreover, oil imports are the single largest component of our Nation's ex-

panding trade deficit. The production of nearly 5 billion gallons of ethanol in 2006 means that last year the U.S. imported 206 million fewer barrels of oil, valued at more than \$11 billion, than would have been the case without ethanol.

Finally, the environmental benefits of using renewable fuels abound. The use of 10 percent ethanol blends reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 12 to 19 percent compared with conventional gasoline. Ethanol reduces tailpipe carbon monoxide emissions by as much as 30 percent, and tailpipe fine particulate matter emissions by as much as 50 percent. In 2004 alone, ethanol use in the U.S. reduced CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent greenhouse gas emissions by more than 7 million tons, equal to removing the annual emissions of more than 1 million cars from the road.

That's why this resolution and this entire debate are so important. Congress is currently considering new energy policy legislation, providing us an opportunity to build on the policies of 2 years ago. In the coming weeks, I'm hopeful that we'll finalize this energy bill and send it to the President, but we must take this opportunity to be bold.

The final bill should certainly contain initiatives to promote energy conservation, but it must also require that we increase our domestic production of renewable energy, both in the electricity sector and in the transportation sector.

The success of our initial renewable energy mandate indicates the wisdom of that policy and demonstrates the need to be even bolder, even more forward looking and even more committed to achieving energy independence in this country.

This resolution today clearly outlines an appropriately aggressive goal for our country over the next 18 years and recognizes the role of American agriculture, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to making the aspirations a reality.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I just want to again thank my good friend Mr. GOODLATTE for his leadership on this issue and the rest of the members of our committee who have worked very hard. We've produced a farm bill that is going to do our part in getting this country off of energy independence.

I also want to thank our leadership, especially Speaker PELOSI for her leadership on this issue.

As I said, we have a tremendous opportunity in rural America and agriculture with this whole effort to get energy independent in this country, and this resolution will help us by establishing that goal.

In Minnesota, where I'm proud to be from, we have led the way. I was just at a grand opening on Friday of a new

plant that's turning turkey manure into electricity, and we have had mandates in Minnesota in ethanol and biodiesel, electricity, and it works.

We've had a tremendous economic development that's come about because of the renewable energy industry that we've developed in Minnesota. So we're proud on the Ag Committee of our work, and we urge our colleagues to join us in supporting H. Con. Res. 25.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 25, expressing the sense of Congress that it is the goal of the United States that, not later than January 1, 2025, the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States should provide from renewable resources not less than 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States and continue to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed, and fiber. I am proud to join over 70 of my colleagues in cosponsoring this important legislation. I would like to thank my distinguished colleague Congressman PETERSON for introducing this bill, as well for his leadership on this issue as the Chairman of the Agriculture Committee.

Madam Speaker, the issue of energy is not only a critical economic issue, it is an urgent national security issue which has reached crisis proportions. With gasoline prices at record levels, the American people are suffering for our dependence on foreign oil.

In addition to being from the energy capital of the world, for the past 12 years I have been the Chair of the Energy Braintrust of the Congressional Black Caucus. During this time, I have hosted a variety of energy braintrusts designed to bring in all of the relevant players ranging from environmentalists to producers of energy from a variety of sectors including coal, electric, natural gas, nuclear, oil, and alternative energy sources as well as energy producers from West Africa. My energy braintrusts were designed to be a call of action to all of the sectors who comprise the American and international energy industry, to the African American community, and to the nation as a whole.

Energy is the lifeblood of every economy, especially ours. Producing more of it leads to more good jobs, cheaper goods, lower fuel prices, and greater economic and national security. Bringing together thoughtful yet disparate voices to engage each other on the issue of energy independence has resulted in the beginning of a transformative dialectic which can ultimately result in reforming our energy industry to the extent that we as a nation achieve energy security and energy independence.

This Congress has demonstrated its commitment to taking our Nation in a new direction, toward energy security and away from dependence on foreign oil. Today, we are considering legislation, known as the "25 by '25 proposal," that expresses the sense of Congress that the goal of the U.S. is that America's farms, forests, and ranches provide 25% of the total energy consumed in America from renewable resources by 2025, while continuing to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed, and fiber.

Madam Speaker, we live in a nation of extraordinary resources. As world oil prices continue to soar, now reaching a record \$86 per barrel, it is vital that harness our vast resources here at home. This legislation lays out

an ambitious goal, one which will require innovation and new thinking about national priorities. However, I believe that the goal of producing 25% of America's energy from renewable resources is well worth aiming for.

Renewable energy can be harnessed in every one of America's 50 States. It can come from resources including wind, solar, hydro-power, and biofuels, and it is currently the fastest growing energy sector. In particular, ethanol introduces the possibility that we can produce 25% of our projected gasoline use in 2025 from farm and forest resources, including many waste materials.

Both the House and the Senate have taken an important first step toward achieving this critical goal by passing comprehensive and bipartisan energy security measures. These initiatives have included critical proposals aimed at reducing our dependence on foreign oil; lowering energy costs through greater efficiency, cleaner energy, and smarter technology; creating new American jobs; and reducing global warming.

Madam Speaker, the legislation we are considering today has the support of a broad range of farm organizations, along with leaders from business, labor, conservation, environmental, and religious groups. It sets an ambitious but achievable goal, and will make important strides toward achieving energy independence. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 25, which calls for 25 percent of America's energy supply to come from agriculture and rural based renewable energy sources by 2025. This 25x25 approach is a worthy goal.

Renewable energy holds wonderful promise for rural America, which can benefit exponentially from these trends. Production of renewable fuels and renewable energy meets multiple policy objectives. It decreases America's reliance on foreign sources of energy, creates new farm income, and fosters good stewardship of resources.

Clearly, Nebraska is a leader in America's renewable energy future. We will soon be the second leading producer of ethanol in the Nation, and we are home to cutting edge technologies that are producing renewable fuels and electricity from wastes at animal feeding operations. In addition, developments in biomass and wind energy are very encouraging. This kind of innovation will only continue to grow as more of America's energy comes from renewable sources.

Madam Speaker, America's renewable energy future is now. This is a very exciting opportunity for our farmers to lead the way for clean, environmentally-friendly energy production. I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 25.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 25.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the concurrent resolution just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

#### LOUISIANA ARMED SERVICES VETERANS POST OFFICE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2089) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the "Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2089

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. LOUISIANA ARMED SERVICES VETERANS POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, shall be known and designated as the "Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

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#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he might consume to the sponsor of this legislation, Representative JEFFERSON from Louisiana.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today as the sponsor of H.R. 2089 to rename the main post office in New Orleans from the New Orleans Main Office Window Service to the Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Memorial Post Office.

I would like to thank Chairman WAXMAN for his leadership in bringing this bill to the floor today as well as my colleague Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, as well

as fellow members of the Louisiana congressional delegation who join me as cosponsor of this measure.

As we approach the commemoration of Veterans Day, it is important to note that the State of Louisiana has made many contributions to each branch of our armed services and, by extension, to the defense of this Nation. My State of Louisiana is home to many proud armed service veterans dating from World War I to the present military engagement in Iraq. I am proud to say that many of my fellow Louisianans have volunteered and sacrificed as soldiers and as families of soldiers in the defense of this great Nation, and it is only appropriate that we memorialize them in this significant way. Louisiana is home to well over 370,000 uniformed veterans. This includes nearly 120,000 who served in World War II, 47,000 in the Korean War, 115,000 in the Vietnam War, and 80,000 in Desert Storm, the first Gulf War.

However, simply citing statistics does not give a complete picture. It doesn't give a complete picture of the sacrifices nor contributions made on behalf of the soldiers nor does it detail the historical relationship of Louisiana and the armed services branches of our Nation. It could be easily argued that the very battle that propelled America onto the world stage as a political and military power was fought on January 8, 1815, just below New Orleans, the Battle of New Orleans. Louisiana military posts were key supply points for the Mexican War of 1848. The Nation's first African American woman to earn her star as a general in the U.S. Army was Sherian Grace Cadoria, who grew up in Marksville, Louisiana, and graduated from my alma mater at Southern University in Baton Rouge.

Louisiana is also home to three major military installations, Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, the Army's Fort Polk Joint Readiness Training Center near Leesville, and in my district, the Belle Chase naval facility across the Mississippi River from New Orleans. Each installation is an integral part of its respective community. Each also employs many local residents and has a profound impact on the economy of our State.

I would be remiss, Madam Speaker, were I not to mention the Louisiana National Guard, which calls New Orleans home at Jackson Barracks. The National Guard has made significant contributions within the State as well as abroad. During the first Gulf War, Louisiana had the highest number of guardsmen serving per capita than any other State in the Nation. However, Louisiana's contributions to the armed services does not come without cost. During the current war in Iraq, Louisiana lost more than 100 of its servicemen and women and over 500 have been wounded; yet this is not the only area in which our armed servicemen and women have paid a high price. Unfortunately, some of our veterans have had to fight two wars, one abroad and then