

In doing so I take this opportunity to also remember the losses suffered at Kent state, I have a dear friend, Corinne Forbes Plaskett who was a student there at the time. She has never forgotten the horror of that experience and I am sure the events of Monday have re-awakened memories for her and others who were there at that time in Ohio.

May God bless all who were affected by both events, and may He bless us all!

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 306, expressing our condolences to the victims and the families involved in the tragedy which occurred this week at Virginia Tech University.

April 16 brought terrible loss to all Americans and particularly to those who are part of a college or university. The nearly 30 years I spent working on a college campus were some of the most fulfilling of my life. I know how much a campus can become a community and the people within it, a family. In some ways, a campus is a haven—of learning and growth—in which students feel safe and free to pursue their dreams and aspirations. To young Americans, a campus is among the last places where such horrific fears could be realized.

When we look back on what occurred this week at Virginia Tech, we will honor those whose lives were taken and those who gave their lives to protect others. We will remember that we can never safeguard against every threat. Still, we can take steps to protect the precious communities in which we live. We must do more to ensure that lethal weapons do not fall into the wrong hands. We must equip campuses and cities with adequate emergency communication systems, so that critical information gets out in time.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we stand with the friends and family members around the world who lost loved ones on that tragic April morning in Virginia.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 306.

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. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. 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 question will be postponed.

COMMENDING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE RUTGERS UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 300) commending the achievements of the Rutgers University women's basketball team and applauding the character and integrity of their student-athletes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 300

Whereas under head coach C. Vivian Stringer the Rutgers University Scarlet Knights women's basketball team finished their extraordinary 2006-2007 season with a 27-9 record;

Whereas after losing four of their first six games the Lady Knights refused to give up and spent their Winter Break in the gym honing their skills and working to become a better team for the rest the season;

Whereas on March 6, 2007, Rutgers upset top-seeded University of Connecticut for their first-ever Big East Championship title;

Whereas the young women displayed great talent in their run to the Final Four of the women's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament;

Whereas five freshmen played an integral role in the team's march to the championship game;

Whereas the Lady Knights showed enormous composure with tournament wins against teams playing in their home States;

Whereas through hard work and determination this young team fought through improbable odds to reach the NCAA title game;

Whereas the team was just the 3d number 4 seed in history to reach the championship;

Whereas the Lady Knights made school history as the first athletic team from Rutgers to play for any national championship;

Whereas during those 3 weeks, the Scarlet Knights brought excitement to the NCAA tournament and captured the hearts of basketball fans throughout New Jersey and across the Nation;

Whereas Rutgers students, alumni, faculty, and staff, along with countless New Jerseyans are immensely proud of what the team accomplished this past season;

Whereas the members of the team are excellent representatives of Rutgers University and of the State of New Jersey;

Whereas these young women are outstanding individuals who are striving to reach lifetime goals both on and off the basketball court;

Whereas the Lady Knights epitomize the term student-athlete with a combined B+ grade point average;

Whereas by excelling in academics, music, and community service, Katie Adams, Matee Ajavon, Essence Carson, Dee Dee Jernigan, Rashidat Junaid, Myia McCurdy, Epiphanny Prince, Judith Brittany Ray, Kia Vaughn, and Heather Zurich are great role models for young women across the Nation; and

Whereas the Lady Knights embody integrity, leadership and class: Now therefore be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the amazing performance of Rutgers University women's basketball team in the NCAA tournament; and

(2) expresses its admiration for the achievements and character of this team of remarkable young women;

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H.R. 300 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, as a representative from New Jersey, I am pleased to rise here in the United States House of Representatives to praise the remarkable young women of Rutgers University, the Rutgers women's basketball team, the Scarlet Knights, and their inspiration, Coach C. Vivian Stringer. They are true champions, not only for their academic and athletic achievement, but for the dignity, strength and class they have shown during this ordeal.

These 10 young women overcame disappointing losses early in the season to advance amazingly to the Final Four. They lost four out of their first seven games. But around the Nation, fans watched as the Scarlet Knights of Rutgers, who lost four of their first seven games, defeated Duke's Blue Devils in the last seconds in an exciting 53-52 upset, the same team that had lost to Duke by 20 points earlier in the season. This victory followed a lopsided defeat of the very strong LSU women's team by a 59-35 score.

When the ugly incident with Don Imus on his morning show cast a shadow over their success, these young women showed what they are made of. In standing up for themselves and their school, they also made a stand on behalf of all young women who insist on being treated with respect and refused to be insulted, as Don Imus did to them, and stereotyped, as he used these disparaging words to describe these wonderful young women.

□ 1130

Don Imus and those of his ilk vastly underestimated New Jersey's strong and proud Scarlet Knights. He underestimated the pride we in New Jersey feel in the remarkable women of this remarkable team. As a matter of fact, during the 13 original States, New Jersey had a theme, and it just said: Do not tread on us. And that meant we are a proud, small State, but do not mess with us. Don Imus did not know the history of New Jersey.

Don Imus may have had a microphone, but he was no match for these young women and their coach who so eloquently spoke up for what is right and what is fair. I am so proud that through their action they were able to persuade two major networks, MSNBC and CBS, as well as numerous advertisers that the days of using the public airwaves to ridicule and debase anyone they choose are over. He did not realize that these women, as I said, at that initial press conference, that they had, with the 10 of them, all underclass persons, dressed in their uniforms, sitting up proud, people who will be future

lawyers and musicians, all top students. As they spoke, as they introduced themselves, it was just a joy, and so Don Imus really did a favor to these young women because it gave America a chance to put a face with a name, to listen to what he said and what he called them and to see just the quality of these young people.

Let me add that it is time that the Federal Communications Commission start doing its job by halting the use of racial and gender slurs over the public airwaves. As long as there is weak enforcement, there will continue to be hate language used by the so-called shock jocks.

As a matter of fact, there was a great outcry when at the Super Bowl there was an indecent of exposure, and there were fines levied because there was some equipment failure, and therefore, there was an outrage of indecency.

However, it is allowed for people to say whatever they want to say. As a matter of fact, in countries, radio has been used to foster hate. As in Rwanda, it was hate radio, Radio Colline, that went on to say, let us get this genocide going; you know what those people look like, go and get them. And it was the radio that pushed this, and so we have to be careful about what we allow to happen on the airwaves. History has shown us that words matter, and when society accepts ugly language, ugly incidents will follow.

I call on the networks to examine their record of hiring minorities for top on-air and executive positions so that African Americans are fairly represented in the media. One reason that the networks made the decision to discontinue the Imus show was that the network employees let the management know how disturbed and offended and embarrassed they were to work for that company. That was the overriding factor, and then the sponsors said that they would withdraw their sponsorship.

And so we will not allow these demeaning commentaries to continue. I once again applaud those young women and their fine coach from the Scarlet Knights at Rutgers University.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution to honor the women's basketball team at Rutgers University for their incredible accomplishments on the court, as well as their courage and integrity off the court.

Led by head coach Vivian Stringer, the Scarlet Knights won their first ever Big East conference tournament championship this year and advanced to the national championship in Cleveland just 2 weeks ago. Though they lost that game to the University of Tennessee, these young women made the 2006-2007 season one to remember for Rutgers students, alumni and fans.

Unfortunately, just hours after the national championship game, they were confronted with some disheart-

ening comments by a radio personality. Throughout all the media coverage that followed these comments, these young women handled themselves with an impressive amount of integrity, with grace and with strong character. As a result, it is their accomplishments on the court, not the comments off the court, for which they should and will be remembered.

Mr. Speaker, the Rutgers University women's basketball team is comprised of student athletes in the truest sense. They have an impressive collective grade point average, a solid selection of majors and a record in the classroom that matches their great work on the hardwood. On the court, these young women have dedicated themselves to improving and honing their skills through many hours of practice both during the school year and during academic recesses.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Scarlet Knights on these accomplishments and wish them the best of luck in all they will take on in the future, and again, I am pleased to honor these young women through this resolution. I believe they have set an example from which many other collegiate athletes can learn.

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey, from the Sixth District (Mr. PALLONE) whose district is the New Brunswick Rutgers, Newark Rutgers is in my district, and I know Camden Rutgers is in your district, Mr. Speaker. So we yield to the gentleman.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend Donald Payne for the introduction and for the comments that he made.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be the sponsor of this resolution honoring the Rutgers University Scarlet Knights women's basketball team, and I applaud their character and integrity. These remarkable young women are a class act, and I am proud to represent them and Rutgers University here in Congress.

Rutgers had a Cinderella season that saw them come back from some devastating early season losses, including a 40-point loss to Duke University. In fact, after losing four of their first six games, the Scarlet Knights refused to give up and spent their winter break in the gym honing their skills and working to become a better team for the rest of the season.

Under head coach V. Vivian Stringer, the Scarlet Knights finished their extraordinary season with a 27-9 record. To cap it off, Rutgers upset top-seeded University of Connecticut for their first ever Big East championship title. They had lost to UConn twice in the regular season.

During the NCAA tournament, they upset top-seeded Duke University in the second round and remained poised with wins against teams playing in

their home States. The team brought excitement to the tournament and captured the hearts of basketball fans throughout New Jersey and across the Nation. Through hard work and determination, this young team fought through improbable odds to reach their first ever NCAA title game.

A day after their loss, outrageous comments were made about the team by Don Imus on his CBS radio and MSNBC show. Afterwards, the team showed great courage in choosing to meet with him so he could see firsthand how wrong his sexist and racist comments were. During this emotionally and mentally exhausting ordeal, these remarkable young women maintained enormous composure as they became media headlines for controversy.

The Scarlet Knights women basketball players are excellent representatives of Rutgers University and of the State of New Jersey. By striving to reach lifetime goals, both on and off the basketball court, they are great role models for student athletes across the Nation. Even with a grueling sports schedule, the players have managed their priorities well. They have maintained academic excellence with a combined B-plus grade point average and are actively involved in the community.

Mr. Speaker, these women are the future leaders of tomorrow. Last week, when faced with adversity, they proved their promise when they stood in front of the entire Nation with dignity and grace.

I think I can speak for Rutgers students, alumni, faculty and staff along with my colleagues here and countless New Jerseyans when I say, we are immensely proud of this team. They deserve to be honored for their hard work, dedication and heart.

I am hopeful that my colleagues will recognize these fine women by passing this resolution today.

□ 1140

Mr. PAYNE. Does the gentleman from California have any further speakers?

Mr. McKEON. We have no more speakers. Do you have any?

Mr. PAYNE. We have no additional speakers.

Let me conclude by thanking the gentleman from California and thanking my colleague from New Jersey. We commend the young Scarlet Knights for the outstanding job that they did.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 300, which congratulates the Rutgers University Women's Basketball Team, coached by the incomparable C. Vivian Stringer, on their extraordinary basketball achievements and applauds their character and integrity as student-athletes. The Rutgers Lady Scarlet Knights women's basketball team embodies all that is great about women's sports: intelligence, toughness, tenacity, leadership and, most of all, class.

The Lady Scarlet Knights also showed the power of athletics in unifying a community, be it Rutgers University, the entire state of New Jersey, or the United States.

That is why it was so disheartening that certain individuals would take this occasion to utter a few disgusting and divisive comments. I strongly condemned those words. There is absolutely no excuse for that kind of conduct, and Don Imus was right to apologize.

What we must do now is address this situation as a country. We must start a dialogue that not only helps to heal the wounds that this type of hateful language renews, but also brings us to a better place as a society.

The Rutgers women's basketball team has been a great inspiration to all of us in this country. These young women are some of the best our country has to offer, and they set an example for girls all across New Jersey and the United States.

The Lady Scarlet Knights completed a dream season, making it all the way to the national championship game where they fell to the Lady Vols (34–3) of the University of Tennessee. The Scarlet Knights (27–9) were appearing in their first-ever championship contest. They made it to the championship game by winning eight consecutive games, including the Big East Conference Tournament and the championship of the Greensboro Regional.

The Lady Scarlet Knights are champions. Congratulations to C. Vivian Stringer, her coaching staff and her exceptional basketball team.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the chorus of voices in commending the achievements of the Rutgers University women's basketball team and applauding the character and integrity of their student-athletes in the face of unmitigated outrage and public humiliation.

This is to thank these young women—and their coach—for the life lessons they taught all of us, both on and off the basketball court. Their stoic dignity and remarkable grace under tremendous pressure and embarrassment were nothing short of a central moment in our national life.

I may be the only one who didn't listen to Don Imus' radio show—I've never been a fan of talk radio, particularly talk radio that exists to exacerbate the pathology of hate speech among us that pointedly seeks to diminish our fellow citizens because of race or gender.

Many people find that funny. I don't . . . and submit that if something is truly funny, everybody laughs. When an audience sucks in their breath in horror, they are not amused.

Free speech? Of course it is, and anybody in this country can say anything they want to, anytime they wish, and they can be as hateful or mean as they choose to be. But, Imus' show went out over the public airwaves—owned by all of us—and was supported by advertisers at MSNBC and CBS. Free speech does not mean you can hurt people over the public airwaves, and it does not mean advertisers must continue to support that hateful speech. So let us not blur the issue on that.

The young ladies of the Rutgers women's basketball team overcame all the odds to get to the final game of the NCAA women's championship, and they came heartbreakingly close to winning the national championship. Their grace and extraordinary sportsmanship was first evident at that game and afterwards . . . then under the glare of the national spotlight as objects of Imus' cruel ridicule.

It is important to note here that it was the advertisers on Imus' show that showed the most backbone in pulling their ads, essentially

saying: our consumers don't appreciate this, goodbye. Had they not pulled their ads, Imus would have completed the familiar cycle of apology and continued ridicule of women and minorities in the name of humor.

The advertisers could not help but be moved by the image of these student athletes calmly relating how the words that hurt so much affected them. Their quiet dignity moved this nation—and was the exact opposite image of a shock jock trying mightily to hold onto a job so he could continue to make fun of them and many other minorities.

I thank these young women—and the leadership of their coach—in teaching all of us a lesson in how this nation treats all our citizens, how we use the public airwaves, and the power of consumers with advertisers in winnowing out that which is hateful entertainment.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the Rutgers women's basketball team for making all New Jerseyans proud through their athletic and academic achievements, as well as through the intelligence, dignity, and class that they showed in response to hateful, racist, and sexist remarks made about and against them. As one of two Members of Congress who represents Rutgers University here in Congress, I would like to pay tribute to them.

The Scarlet Knights had a remarkable season, winning 27 games on their way to the national championship game. The Big East Champions played hard and displayed all the attributes of a championship team—hustle, dedication, skill, and teamwork. But what distinguished this team most, in my opinion, is not what happened during the season, but after it.

It is unfortunate that the end of this amazing season was marked not by a celebration of their achievements on the basketball court and in the classroom, but by ignorant, racist, and sexist remarks by a radio personality. The players and coaches were understandably hurt and angry, and their reaction to these hateful words shows why all New Jerseyans deserve to be proud.

The players and Coach Vivian Stringer reacted with restraint, eloquence, and dignity. They engaged with the person who had insulted them. They told their personal views of why his words were so hurtful and inappropriate, and they accepted his apology. I hope that this incident will lead to a broader dialogue about race relations in this country. I look forward to working with community and religious leaders, elected officials, and others in New Jersey to foster an atmosphere where such comments are not only condemned, but do not happen in the first place.

We hold up college athletics not for the entertainment of alumni and fans, but because we believe athletic participation builds character. These women of the Rutgers basketball team showed that they have character.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Rutgers University women's basketball team on their outstanding 2006–2007 season.

As highlighted in this resolution, the Lady Knights sacrificed their own personal vacations over winter break to stay at school and train for their well-deserved victories in 2007.

It is this dedication that gained them the Big East Championship title and a spot in the women's NCAA final four. It also made them the very first athletic team from Rutgers to

earn a spot playing in a national championship. Their hard work, perseverance, and extraordinary skill have set an excellent example for athletes everywhere: women and men alike. And, as the national media spotlight turned on them in the wake of the ugly remarks by radio shock jock Don Imus, they maintained the same poise and grace under pressure that they exhibited on the court.

I would especially like to extend my congratulations to sophomore, Heather Zurich of Montvale, New Jersey. Her performance with the Lady Knights as forward was an integral component to the team's success this season.

The Rutgers University women's basketball team is a great source of pride to their campus and all of us New Jerseyans. I applaud their accomplishments and look forward to hearing of their future successes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 300.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. 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 question will be postponed.

HONORING THE 53,000 SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN, MARINES, AND CIVILIANS THAT COMPRISE THE NATION'S SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES COMMUNITY

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 305) honoring the 53,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and civilians that comprise the Nation's special operations forces community.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 305

Whereas the failure to organize, train, equip, and plan special operations forces (SOF) missions in a joint environment ultimately led to the aborted military operation Eagle Claw, more commonly referred to as Desert One, where eight servicemembers lost their lives attempting to rescue American hostages held in Tehran;

Whereas this failure led to Congressional passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, which established the United States Special Operations Command and the principle legal authority for the United States military to organize, train, equip, and operate jointly;

Whereas April 16, 2007, marks the 20th year anniversary of the establishment of United States Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida;