

As his family will tell you, one of the things he loved most was leading the Blue Santa Program to provide gifts for needy families during the Christmas season. He helped raise money for Blue Santa with auctions, and he even served as an auctioneer.

To Joe's wife, Robyn, and Joe's entire family, and to the good people of Lee County, you have the thanks of a grateful Nation. We are indebted to you, and we mourn your loss.

So to the good Lord above, I hope you are ready for one more angel up there because Sheriff Joe is on his way.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LEADERSHIP NEEDED IN THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss the topic of leadership. The American people are demanding action from this Congress and so far they have really seen very little.

A recent Wall Street Journal-NBC poll shows that more than 60 percent of Americans think that this Congress has done little or nothing since the leadership change took place in November. And you know what, Mr. Speaker, they are right. Not one piece of the liberal agenda has been signed into law. Instead of crafting legislation that can be implemented, this Congress has wasted the last 4 months and taxpayer dollars as a stage for political theater, and they have nothing to show for it.

When I go home to my district, like I did this weekend, and visit with my constituents, what I am hearing from them is really a lot of frustration. They are getting tired of the political grandstanding. What they want to see, Mr. Speaker, is action. They want us to be problem solvers on the problems they face every day.

The people of the Seventh District want us to hold the line and to not raise taxes. They want to keep more of their hard-earned money. They don't want government to have first right of refusal on that money. They want first

right of refusal, and they want to keep those paychecks in their pocket. I believe that the American taxpayer knows how to better spend his own money than the Federal Government.

In my district, we hear a lot of people talk about keeping that money. I have said many times, if 10 percent is good enough for God, 10 percent ought to be good enough for the government. My constituents agree with that.

The people of Tennessee want to win in the war on terror. They want us to support our men and women in uniform by giving them the supplies they need to win. Anything less than that is insulting to the men and women who stand to protect us every day. The liberal leadership of this Congress says the war is lost. It is time to give up. They also claim to support the troops. In my district, Mr. Speaker, we believe you can't have it both ways. You don't support the troops by threatening to withhold critical funding. You don't support the troops by imposing artificial deadlines and taking control of battlefield operations out of the hands of the men and women and the commanders in the field. And you don't support the troops by telling them that you think the war is lost.

The people of Tennessee want our borders secure and they want us to enforce the immigration laws on the books. Granting illegal immigrants amnesty is insulting and unrealistic. It is insulting to all of our constituents who have spent years of time and money entering the country the legal and right way. It devalues all of their hard work and their efforts, and if anyone thinks that granting amnesty to illegal immigrants that are already here will stop more people from crossing the border in the middle of the night, well, they are just fooling themselves.

All of this talk of amnesty will only increase illegal immigration and the traffic that it brings at our borders because it is setting a precedent for the future. We know that. We have seen history repeat itself. Do they actually think that those who are illegally here will voluntarily go back to their home country, stand at the back of the line, and pay a fine when they are already here? And if they are caught, it is rare that they are deported. That is the incentive to integrate the right way, to come into this country through legal channels.

The law should be enforced, Mr. Speaker. That is what people want to see. No amnesty, enforce the laws on the book, not reward those that have illegally entered the country, be certain that people immigrate to this Nation the right way.

It is also a matter of national security. In this post-9/11 era, it is against our national security interest to allow an open border. For instance, three of the six people that are charged in plotting to attack U.S. Army post, Fort Dix, were in the country illegally. Records show there is no record of them ever entering this country. Many

of the 9/11 hijackers were in the country with expired visas. Yet, several of them still had their driver's license.

It is evident that radical terrorists whose sole purpose is to destroy this Nation and our way of life are here living among us. It is time that we stand in the gap. It is time that we do our job, that we lead, and we do it to protect the American people. They are watching.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

COMMENDING WE THE PEOPLE WINNERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, last month more than 1,200 students from across the country visited Washington to participate in the national finals of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution.

This program is the most extensive educational program in the country, developed to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

It is with great pride that I recognize a class from my own Highlands High School of Fort Thomas, Kentucky, in the Fourth District for their accomplishment in this competition.

These outstanding students, using knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, won their statewide competition and earned the chance to come to our Nation's capital and compete at the national level. At the national level, these dedicated students won the Unit One: Foundations of Democracy Award.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the names of these outstanding young people from Highlands High School: Alex Adams, Evan Bush, Kara Dyer, Jessica Earlywine, Jessica Federle, Maria Gurren, John Holloway, Alan Hutchinson, Marjorie Kimball, Connie Kremer, Sam Laskey, Heather Moyer, Emily Nordling, Anna Remley, Lauren Runk, Andrea Spencer, and Corwyn Wyatt.

I also wish to commend the teacher of the class, Julie Kuhnheim, who is responsible for preparing these young constitutional experts for the national finals. Also worthy of special recognition are Rachel Bingham and Robin Winkfield, the State coordinators, and Glenn Manns, the district coordinator, who are among those responsible for implementing the We the People program in my State.

I congratulate these students on their exceptional achievement at the We the People national finals. One thing we can all remember is that

there is no substitute for participating in the governmental process, no substitute for the investment of our lives and our time. I commend all of you for your hard work and for the long hours of preparation, and commend you for a victory well earned, well deserved and bringing honor and credit to the Fourth District of Kentucky.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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IMMIGRANT SOLDIERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity today to rise and speak on a subject that has been conspicuously absent from legislative debate over the issue of immigration reform. Over the length of this debate, the proponents of the enforcement-only approach, some of which you heard earlier this evening, have repeatedly referred to immigrants as dangerous to the American economy, as dangerous to our society and dangerous to our culture.

A number of my colleagues argue that immigrants take away jobs from American citizens and that immigration has a net effect of shrinking the middle class. They suspect immigrants generally of bringing crime, drugs, and even terrorism into our country. And they suggest that immigrants weaken our patriotic culture by failing to assimilate into American society.

Fear characterizes all of these sentiments and arguments. Fear of change, both economic and social change. Fear of new contributions to the fabric of American culture. Generally, a fear of the "other."

Fear can be a powerful and dangerous force. It can motivate hate. It can impede toleration and understanding. Fear can paralyze us with paranoia and blind us to reasoned and logical argument. Fear in the media and in the Halls of Congress have distorted the image of immigrants in this country.

Much as sensationalist TV programming can make us believe that our communities are more dangerous than they really are, sensationalist characterizations of the immigrant population based on anecdotal examples or predictions of worst-case scenarios can falsely lead us to negative, reactionary, and unfounded opinions about immigrants.

I can no longer tolerate the blanket generalizations used to cast our Na-

tion's immigrant population in a universally negative and threatening light. They do not reflect reality. They misrepresent our national interest with respect to immigration. These arguments polarize the public and prevent reasoned and productive dialogue, and they promote a legislative climate that distracts us from our national interest in reforming our broken immigration policies.

We can all agree that we need comprehensive immigration reform, but we must also come to an understanding that demonizing immigrants will not get us there. Ostracizing immigrants in this country with venomous and inapt rhetoric will not move us toward the integration of newcomers into our economy, or the promotion of safe streets for our children to play in, or assimilation of the immigrant population into American society.

It can only delay the time when the immigrant population becomes a fully functional and participatory component of our American society. It can only set back the day when we can guarantee the security of our borders and documentation of all individuals that cross those borders.

Like my colleagues that emphasize tough border enforcement, I, too, believe in reform that provides security for our country and documentation for all the individuals that enter American territory. I think that we speak with a common voice regarding our homeland security goals. Our approaches to talking about the issues of immigration and the methods for solving the problem may differ, but we share common goals in promoting our national and economic security. Debate over approaches to immigration reform is a topic for responsible legislative discourse.

Today, my colleagues and I speak on a related topic about some of the immigrants that are the subjects of our larger debate over immigration. The immigrants we want to talk about are not threats to our national security, they are not threats to our economy, and they are not threats to our people. They, in fact, have demonstrated their solidarity with our Nation. Unquestionably, they wish to contribute to our security and to our economy. And the individuals we speak of cannot be considered separately as friend or foe to the American people, because they demonstrate daily that they are, in fact, Americans in their own right.

The individuals we rise to speak of today are the tens of thousands of brave men and women in the American Armed Forces that were not born in the United States. Like the courageous sons and daughters born and raised in my home State of Texas and throughout this country, these individuals have taken an oath to defend the United States of America with their very lives if necessary.

These immigrant soldiers may differ from their native-born brothers and sisters in terms of location of their

birth and even in their citizenship status; however, on the battlefield, they are united by a common purpose.

Among the soldiers in the United States military, there is no distinction between those that are born in Texas, in the Philippines, or in Mexico. They all take an oath. They all assume the same risks. They all make the same sacrifice. All are worthy of honor and distinction, and we must thank them all equally for giving so generously that we, living in communities across this great Nation, may do so peacefully.

Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege tonight and a true honor that the first member of the United States Armed Services that we are about to honor is Lance Corporal Jose Antonio Gutierrez, and this is the photo of Jose Antonio when he was a little boy, an orphan and I will be a little more specific in a minute, to the time he put on this uniform of the United States Marine.

He was the first member of the United States Armed Forces killed in Iraq. He was not a citizen of this country.

Marine Lance Corporal Jose Antonio Gutierrez, like most Guatemalans, was born into poverty. He was orphaned in 1983 at the age of 9 and taken in by Casa Alianza, or Covenant House, in Guatemala City. The causes and dates of his parents' deaths are unknown to us today.

For the next 10 years, Lance Corporal Gutierrez led a tragic and tumultuous life, bouncing from the orphanage to the street and back again. His adulthood, like his childhood, was characterized by hardship. He worked for a time in a maquila plant, a sweatshop, operating a sewing machine. Even as a single person, making ends meet at such a job was incredibly difficult for this young man.

In early 1997, Lance Corporal Gutierrez made a decision to travel to the United States to seek a better life. He arrived in California an undocumented immigrant. He attended North High School in Torrance, California.

In March 2002, Lance Corporal Gutierrez enlisted in the United States Marine Corps because he wanted to become a citizen of this great country. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion of the Expeditionary Forces of the United States Marines 1st Division.

Lance Corporal Gutierrez was killed a year later, close to the city of Umm al Qasr in southern Iraq, on March 21, 2003. He was 28 years old.

This man's sacrifice, the first life laid down in the sands of Iraq on behalf of the United States, is testament to the belief of immigrants in the promise of America. It is a symbol of patriotism, of commitment to defending a dream that we all share.

In May of last year, according to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service, nearly 69,000 foreign-born soldiers, 5 percent of the entire military, are on active duty. Five percent are foreign born.