

25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, HI. He was from Clovis, CA.

LCpl Matthew S. Medlicott, 21, died August 25, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Lance Corporal Medlicott was assigned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

LCpl Rogelio A. Ramirez, 21, died August 26, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Lance Corporal Ramirez was assigned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Pasadena, CA.

CPL John C. Tanner, 21, died August 29, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Tanner was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SGT Michael J. Yarbrough, 24, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Sergeant Yarbrough was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SSG John C. Stock, 26, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Staff Sergeant Stock was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Bryan J. Scripsick, 22, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Scripsick was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Christopher L. Poole Jr., 22, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Poole was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SPC Marisol Heredia, 19, died on September 7, at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, TX, of injuries sustained on July 18, in Baghdad, Iraq, from a non-combat related incident. Specialist Heredia was assigned to the 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. She was from El Monte, CA.

CAPT Drew N. Jensen, 27, died September 7, in Seattle of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit using small arms fire during combat operations May 7 in Ba'qubah, Iraq. Captain Jensen was assigned to the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), Fort Lewis, WA. He was from Clackamas, CA.

LCpl Lance M. Clark, 21, died September 7, from a non-hostile incident in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I

Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Carlos E. Gilorozco, 23, died September 10, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Gilorozco was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, NC. He was from San Jose, CA.

SPC Nicholas P. Olson, 22, died September 18, in Muqadadiyah, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit during combat operations. Specialist Olson was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Fort Lewis, WA. He was from Novato, CA.

CPL Anthony K. Bento, 23, died September 24, in Bayji, Iraq, of injuries sustained when his dismounted patrol encountered small arms fire. Corporal Bento was assigned to A Company, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC. He was from San Diego, CA.

SGT Robert T. Ayres III, 23, died on September 29, in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries sustained when he encountered small arms fire while on dismounted patrol. Sergeant Ayres was assigned to A Company, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Los Angeles, CA.

SPC Avealalo Milo, 23, died October 4, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit using small arms fire. Specialist Milo was assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Hayward, CA.

LCpl Jeremy W. Burris, 22, died October 8, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Burris was assigned to 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Gilberto A. Meza, 21, died October 6, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit. Corporal Meza was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Oxnard, CA.

SPC Frank L. Cady III, 20, died on October 10, in Baghdad, Iraq, when his vehicle overturned. Specialist Cady was assigned to B Company, 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS. He was from Sacramento, CA.

SPC Vincent A. Madero, 22, died October 17, in Balad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Specialist Madero was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. He was from Port Hueneme, CA.

CPL Erik T. Garoutte, 22, died October 19, in Baghdad, Iraq. Corporal

Garoutte was assigned to 1st Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Team Company, Marine Corps Security Force Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Norfolk, VA. He was from Santee, CA.

SPC Wayne M. Geiger, 23, died October 18, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Specialist Geiger was assigned to 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Lone Pine, CA.

SSG David A. Wieger, 28, died November 1, near Balad Air Base, Iraq, of wounds suffered from an improvised explosive device. Staff Sergeant Weiger was a special agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and was assigned to Detachment 303, Travis Air Force Base, CA.

I would also like to pay tribute to the five soldiers from California who have died while serving our country in Operation Enduring Freedom since July 23.

SGT Travon T. Johnson, 29, died on July 23, in the Sarobi District of Afghanistan of injuries sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his mounted patrol. Sergeant Johnson was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, Caserma Ederle, Italy. He was from Palmdale, CA.

MSG Patrick D. Magnani, 38, died September 4, near Bagram, Afghanistan, in a non-combat related incident. Master Sergeant Magnani was assigned to the 31st Medical Support Squadron, Aviano Air Base, Italy. He was from Martinez, CA.

CPL Travis M. Woods, 21, died September 9, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Northern Helmand province of Afghanistan. Corporal Woods was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Redding, CA.

PFC Mathew D. Taylor, 21, died September 26, in San Antonio of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle July 23, in the Sarobi District of Afghanistan. Private First Class Taylor was assigned to the 1st Battalion, Airborne, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, Vicenza, Italy. He was from Cameron Park, CA.

SSG Joseph F. Curreri, 27, died October 27, in Siet, Lake Jolo Island, Philippines, from injuries sustained in a non-combat related incident. Staff Sergeant Curreri was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Airborne, Fort Lewis, WA. He was from Los Angeles, CA.

#### COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, as chairwoman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,

Science, and Related Agencies, I rise today to notify the Senate that I sponsored an amendment to H.R. 3093, the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act that provided \$3 million in funding for Teach for America, headquartered in New York, NY, to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education.

#### PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an excerpt from the remarks by President George W. Bush at the Presidential Medal of Freedom presentation at the White House on November 5, 2007, honoring Harper Lee of Monroeville, AL.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.

Good morning. Laura and I are thrilled to welcome you to the White House. We welcome the members of Congress, the members of the Cabinet, and other distinguished guests. It's an honor to be with the Medal of Freedom recipients, as well as their family members and friends. We're sure glad you're here.

The Medal of Freedom is the highest civil honor that a President can bestow. By an executive order of John F. Kennedy, the medal is designed to recognize great contributions to national security, the cause of peace and freedom, science, the arts, literature, and many other fields. The eight men and women came to this distinction by very different paths. Each of them, by effort and by character, has earned the respect of the American people, and holds a unique place in the story of our time.

The story of an old order, and the glimmers of humanity that would one day overtake it, was unforgettably told in a book by Miss Harper Lee. Soon after its publication a reviewer said this: "A hundred pounds of sermons on tolerance, or an equal measure of invective deploring the lack of it, will weigh far less in the scale of enlightenment than a mere 18 ounces of a new fiction bearing the title *To Kill a Mockingbird*."

Given her legendary stature as a novelist, you may be surprised to learn that Harper Lee, early in her career, was an airline reservation clerk. Fortunately for all of us, she didn't stick to writing itineraries. Her beautiful book, with its grateful prose and memorable characters, became one of the biggest-selling novels of the 20th century.

Forty-six years after winning the Pulitzer Prize, *To Kill a Mockingbird* still touches and inspires every reader. We're moved by the story of a man falsely accused—with old prejudice massed against him, and an old sense of honor that rises to his defense. We learn that courage can be a solitary business. As the lawyer Atticus Finch tells his daughter, "before I can live

with other folks I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience."

Years after *To Kill a Mockingbird* was put to film, the character of Atticus Finch was voted the greatest movie hero of all time. It won Gregory Peck the Oscar. He was said to believe the role "brought him closest to being the kind of man he aspired to be." The great actor counted Harper Lee among his good friends, and we're so pleased that Gregory Peck's wife, Veronique, is with us today. Thank you for coming.

One reason *To Kill a Mockingbird* succeeded is the wise and kind heart of the author, which comes through on every page. This daughter of Monroeville, Alabama had something to say about honor, and tolerance, and, most of all, love—and it still resonates. Last year Harper Lee received an honorary doctorate at Notre Dame. As the degree was presented, the graduating class rose as one, held up copies of her book, and cheered for the author they love.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* has influenced the character of our country for the better. It's been a gift to the entire world. As a model of good writing and humane sensibility, this book will be read and studied forever. And so all of us are filled with admiration for a great American and a lovely lady named Harper Lee.

Thank you all for coming. I hope you've enjoyed this ceremony as much as I have. May God bless you all. Thank you.

#### PLAIN LANGUAGE IN GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS ACT

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need to write government documents in plain language.

This past Sunday, November 4, 2007, the Washington Post ran an article entitled "Parsing the Fine Print in Federal Ads." This article illustrates exactly why the Federal Government must begin writing in language that the American people can understand.

The Federal Government has a pressing need to recruit skilled employees. Many agencies are understaffed, and more than 50 percent of the Federal workforce will be eligible to retire in the next 5 years. Yet advertisements for Federal jobs are described as "incomprehensible," "opaque," "dense," and "convoluted." The article quotes two different people who have written entire books about applying for Federal jobs, one of whom states that understanding a Federal job announcement can take hours and likens the process to explicating a poem in English class.

It is well known that the Federal hiring process is lengthy and complex. Agencies need to look for ways to streamline and improve the hiring process, especially now that the Federal government is facing a large num-

ber of retirements. One easy step that agencies can take is to write announcements in plain language.

Writing Federal job announcements in plain language would save applicants considerable time and energy spent attempting to figure out what a job advertisement means. Plain, clear, accessible ads are much more likely to attract candidates' attention than opaque and incomprehensible ones. By writing job ads in plain language, agencies likely would attract more candidates with strong qualifications, which would go a long way toward addressing the Federal Government's human capital challenges.

I urge my colleagues to support the Plain Language in Government Communications Act of 2007, S. 2291, and I ask unanimous consent that the article from the Washington Post be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 4, 2007]

PARSING THE FINE PRINT ON FEDERAL ADS

(By Mary Ellen Slayter)

Uncle Sam really does want you, even though at times it can be hard to figure out what exactly he wants you to do.

Federal job ads can seem particularly opaque to people looking to make the switch from the private sector. Or as one wannabe fed put it in my online chat recently: "What gives with USAJobs.com? The job descriptions on that site are incomprehensible to a person (like me) who hasn't worked for a government agency before. Seriously, they don't make any sense."

"The federal application process is complex to say the least," said Dennis Damp, author of *The Book of U.S. Government Jobs* and a retired senior manager for the Federal Aviation Administration. Part of that is for good reason, he said; the process is designed to be fair, judging applicants on the basis of their qualifications, without discrimination or nepotism.

Even when you agree that those are commendable goals, the process can be exasperating. But those frustrations can be overcome with a little patience—and by making that seemingly dense job ad work for you.

Damp's book devotes a chapter to analyzing the job announcement, breaking it down piece by piece and showing applicants how to craft an effective résumé based on the information given. He said a common mistake people make is not reading the whole announcement before throwing their hands up in bewilderment—though he certainly sympathizes with them. "It's a ton of data that can be very confusing initially. You can't stop at the first paragraph, because if you do, you're probably bypassing positions that you're qualified for."

He also includes several cross-referenced indexes, which can be particularly helpful to the truly lost hunter who isn't sure if he's even looking at the right types of jobs to match his private-sector skill set.

"The announcement gives you so much content to use, if we slow down and appreciate what's in there," said Kathryn Kraemer Troutman, author of the *Federal Resume Guidebook* and president of the Resume Place, a consulting firm that specializes in helping applicants for federal jobs.

She offers a simple strategy for making sense of announcements: Start with the "duties" section. Count the sentences in the