

movie, "A Life Interrupted: The Debbie Smith Story."

Madam Speaker, I rise to request that my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing Lifetime Television for its tireless efforts to educate and inform the American public about important issues confronting women in our society and to achieve equality and justice for women all over the world.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF STAN MAYFIELD

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 3, 2008

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and public service of Stan Mayfield—a native Floridian, civic leader, and defender of the taxpayer. Florida lost a dear friend on September 30, 2008, when Stan Mayfield's hard fought battle with cancer came to an end.

As a businessman, school board member, and a state legislator, Stan's community leadership is a testament of his commitment to public service. However, his greatest role was that of husband and father. I extend my deepest and most heartfelt sympathies to his wife, Deborah, and their three sons—Evan, Samuel, and Coleman, at this difficult time.

Stan's community involvement was expansive, from his service on the Indian River County School Board to his tenure in the Florida State House of Representatives. Stan was known for his tenacity to hold government accountable for greater transparency, and his determination to cap spending and fight for lower taxes, but his passion for greater infrastructure, conservation, and Indian River County is what his friends and colleagues will remember.

Most recently, Stan was preparing for a new chapter in his life after winning his primary election for Indian River County Tax Collector. A model of strong perseverance, Stan refused to allow his illness to deter him from public service and doing what he loved—serving people. It was this motivation and resolve that Stan put toward every challenge that truly exemplifies his character.

My thoughts and prayers are with Stan's loved ones, his friends, and his many colleagues who served with him throughout his many years in public service.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE BUD CRAMER AND THE HONORABLE TERRY EVERETT ON THEIR RETIREMENT FROM CONGRESS

SPEECH OF

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, the people of Alabama will be losing two outstanding public servants at the end of this session with the retirements of Congressman BUD CRAMER and Congressman TERRY EVERETT.

During the time that I have served in the House, I have been honored to call them both colleagues and friends. They have served the constituents in their own districts extraordinarily well, and have been a key part of securing the reputation of the Alabama delegation as a group that works together on a bipartisan basis for the good of our State.

Congressman CRAMER has had a long and distinguished record of service. One great legacy is his stalwart support of our space and missile defense programs. Whenever questions on those programs came up in the House, we looked to BUD CRAMER for his knowledge and guidance. As a result of his efforts, facilities in the Fifth District like NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, and the Redstone Arsenal have become not just important employers in Alabama but true national assets.

We admire and respect BUD CRAMER for another reason: his great compassion for children and deep concern about the tragedy of child abuse. Each year, the National Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville that he founded teaches thousands of people how to recognize and help at-risk children.

For years, it has been my pleasure to work with Congressman TERRY EVERETT of the Second District. He has always been the type of representative who makes this House work. He holds firm to his principles, but works across the aisle to find solutions.

With his duties on the Armed Services and Intelligence Committees, Congressman EVERETT developed a well-earned reputation for expertise in defense and intelligence issues. Whenever my staff or I had a question about these matters, our response was: "Ask TERRY what he thinks." His support of the excellent work being done at Fort Rucker and the Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base has benefited both the constituents in his district and the people of our country by strengthening the national defense.

All of us in the Alabama delegation have been privileged to work with BUD CRAMER and TERRY EVERETT. While we'll no longer be congressional colleagues, we will always remain friends. Both of these leaders, I know, will continue to have much to share with their communities and our State of Alabama in the years ahead.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 3, 2008

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in order to state for the record an explanation of my absence and how I would have voted on several of the bills that were considered by the House of Representatives while I was in Texas helping the relief and recovery effort after Hurricane Ike damaged my district and communities so hard.

As my colleagues and those in the gallery know, Hurricane Ike made landfall along the Upper Texas Coast early in the morning of Saturday, September 13. The effects of this storm stretched from Alabama to Texas, with the 11 counties that I represent landing right in the middle of the storm's path. The resulting

damage was widespread and in some cases very significant. Many of the people that I represent are still without power and for many, especially in Orange County, life will never be the same. Their homes were completely flooded and many will never be livable again. It is a testament to the hardworking and self-reliant people of southeast Texas that they are already picking up the pieces and helping themselves and others in the recovery. I want to thank those first responders, the local governments, the State of Texas, and selfless individuals that have helped during the evacuation and recovery process.

We have worked tirelessly since Hurricane Rita to ensure that Texas' first responders were better prepared for the next time a hurricane hit the Texas coast. I have spent my time since September 13, meeting with individual citizens, FEMA, officials from Texas and local communities, utility providers and others to identify shortcomings, offer help and support, and ensure the best level of service is provided now and the next time a hurricane strikes Texas or we are affected by some other emergency situation.

While I was working in Texas after Ike made landfall, the House voted on several important pieces of legislation for which I would like to register my views.

First, H.R. 6899, the Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Protection Act; despite the bill's name, H.R. 6899 would actually harm our nation's energy security, and accordingly, I would have voted against passage of the bill.

This bill opens a sliver of our offshore resources to development, while permanently closing off the rest. In fact, the Department of Interior's Mineral and Management Service calculated that this bill would ban most of our nation's outer continental shelf oil and gas natural resources from development. This bill is the equivalent of cracking open the gate, bolting the front door shut and then throwing away the key. It is the wrong energy policy for our country.

Moreover, in addition to this bait-and-switch approach to the offshore moratorium on energy exploration, the bill neglects to provide for revenue sharing among the states for offshore leasing. Without a revenue sharing incentive from the federal government, states are highly unlikely to allow the drilling that our country desperately needs. This is not the energy solution the American people want, and Congress should not replace the current temporary ban on offshore exploration with a permanent one.

House Democrats also offered another gimmick on energy policy instead of providing real relief at the pump to my constituents recovering from Hurricane Ike and all Americans. H.R. 6604 was billed as a way to cut speculation in energy markets, while in reality it did nothing but paper over Democrat's inaction on offering real solutions to America's energy problems. I voted against largely the same bill this summer and would have done so here as well. This bill was nothing more than window dressing and a thinly veiled attempt to placate the American public. In reality, it does little more than insult the intelligence of the American public; but the American public won't be fooled.

But Democrats are starting to buckle to pressure from the American public. In the House-passed stop-gap funding bill, the

House lifted the moratorium on off-shore oil exploration and oil shale production. If the moratorium is lifted in the Senate as well, America will be one step closer to energy relief.

Lastly, the House passed legislation last week to uphold the landmark Supreme Court's decision in DC v. Heller. DC v. Heller upheld the 2nd Amendment rights of residents of Washington, DC that had been trampled on for over 30 years. I would have proudly supported the Childers amendment to H.R. 6691 and supported the amended bill on final passage. As a matter of fact I am a co-sponsor of legislation very similar to the Childers Amendment, H.R. 1399, the District of Columbia Personal Protection Act. I am glad to see that the House has taken a bi-partisan step to protect the Constitutional right to keep and bear arms.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue providing relief to those suffering from Hurricane Ike and I appreciate the speed with which this Congress has acted to help provide that relief thus far. However, just as we learned after Hurricane Rita, this process will be on going and it will take the continued effort of Congress, Texas, local communities and individual citizens to complete the recovery effort. I ask that all Americans continue to offer their thoughts and prayers to those along the gulf coast.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 3, 2008

MR. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a fine educational institution in the 19th Congressional District of Texas. This year, Wayland Baptist University, located in Plainview, Texas celebrates its 100th anniversary of excellence in education.

Wayland Baptist University is a 4-year university with a total of 14 campuses and a student body of more than 6,000. Founded in Plainview in 1908 by Dr. James Wayland, the University has become one of the largest Southern Baptist institutions of higher education in the country.

Throughout its 100 years, Wayland Baptist University has seen much progress and growth. While maintaining its commitment to providing a quality Christian education, Wayland has been at the forefront of change. It was among the first universities in the country to admit women and minority students, offer distance learning programs, and to create programs directed toward military students.

Wayland places a strong emphasis on student success and provides an excellent learning environment. The school offers a wide variety of disciplines, from fine arts to engineering, as well as a wide variety of extracurricular activities. Athletics at Wayland provide a constant source of pride for the community, producing more than 800 All-Americans and 100 individual national championships in the last century.

Dynamic vision and devotion to students are the true marks of an exceptional educational institution. On this occasion of its 100th anni-

versary, I congratulate Wayland Baptist University and look forward to watching this institution thrive in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO ST. JOHN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 3, 2008

MR. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate St. John's Health System in Springfield, MO, for their work to improve the quality of health care services provided to our seniors. St. John's Health System was recently recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for their outstanding commitment to improving Medicare patient outcomes as participants in a new chronic disease management demonstration program.

Nearly 70 percent of all deaths in America are attributable to chronic diseases. Chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are some of the most common diseases but they are also the most preventable diseases. Working to prevent these diseases from being acquired in the first place should be our top priority. Managing these diseases so that adverse outcomes are minimized should be next on the list.

Unfortunately, most of the health insurance programs that the Federal Government operates do not place the same prioritization in its payment policies. We don't encourage individuals to seek preventative care and we barely reward individuals who change their lifestyles when diagnosed. We pay in the end with the final bill, but the Federal Government doesn't pay for the course of treatment that will deliver better health outcomes and a longer, more productive life. Ultimately all Americans pay the price for the high costs of chronic diseases.

Over the past 2 years St. John's Health System has participated in a national demonstration program. The results of this project will help to identify new, innovative models to deliver higher quality health care. St. John's was one of only five physician groups that achieved benchmark quality performance for all measures used during the evaluation. I am pleased that St. John's is being recognized nationally for their excellent care for the citizens of southwest Missouri. I hope that, following St. John's leadership, the final results of the demonstration program will bring meaningful changes in delivery of health care services for all of our seniors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE VETERANS OF OSS GREEK OPERATIONS GROUP II ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR RECEIVING THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR VALOR

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 3, 2008

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the brave men of the Office of Strategic Services' Greek Op-

erations Group II who fought to liberate occupied Greece during World War II. This month, these heroes are being awarded the Bronze Star Medal for Valor for their service in defense of freedom.

In February 1943 at the height of World War II, the Greek government in exile sought help from the United States for Andartes, the Greek Resistance against Nazi occupation. In response, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the forerunner of the CIA) formed top-secret Greek Operations Groups (OGs) from the 122nd Infantry Battalion. After undergoing rigorous training, almost 200 largely Greek-born or Hellenic-American soldiers launched their secret mission, undeterred by warnings that most would not likely survive the perilous fighting behind enemy lines. Chosen for their fluency or near-fluency in Greek, their physical fitness and ability to endure arduous service in rugged mountain terrain, and their intense motivation to oust the Nazi occupiers from the land of their ancestors, these teams were inserted behind enemy lines. From April to September 1944, the men of OG II fought alongside the Greek Resistance, delaying and harassing the Nazi withdrawal, eliminating enemy troops, and destroying their equipment in order to weaken the final defense of Germany against the Allies.

Operations Group II, led by Lt. John Giannaris, operating chiefly out of the tiny remote village of Pappas, conducted military operations primarily against the railroad in the mountains between Lamia and Domokos. During a four-month period the team participated in 14 missions during which they destroyed three locomotives and 31 railway cars, blew up 7,400 yards of rail line, and inflicted 675 casualties on the enemy. On September 8th, 1944, as the group approached a heavily patrolled area, it came under point-blank enemy machine gun fire.

OG II member Michalis Tsirmulas was hit. Under a withering assault, Lt. Giannaris ordered a withdrawal while himself crawling to aid Tsirmulas, only to learn he had been killed. After being severely wounded, Lt. Giannaris narrowly escaped capture, passing within earshot of German soldiers hunting him down. He was found by two local shepherdesses, who cared for him and contacted his men. In a daring daylight escape, Lt. Giannaris was spirited to safety in a British aircraft.

The story of the Greek-American OGs was highly classified for more than 40 years. The full account of these soldiers and their accomplishments was unknown even to the surviving participants. After fighting in Greece ended, most of them went on to other assignments in Europe and Asia. They returned home never knowing the enormous impact their mission had on events in Greece. Most never spoke of their experience with the O.S.S. for many years, even to their families. Many years later, Giannaris, since promoted to Captain, recommended his men for an award. The Defense Department agreed and authorized the Bronze Star Medal for valor.

Recently, a search began for survivors and descendants of the deceased of OSS Greek OG II, undertaken by Dr. Robert Perdue, OG II historian and a retired agricultural research scientist. This month at a ceremony in Astoria, New York, the 22 enlisted men of OG II will be honored at a ceremony. One surviving enlisted member of OG II will attend as will families of six deceased members of the Group,