

Farming is an important part of Minnesota's culture. A true love of the land and of nature's beauty is ingrained in our collective psyche and I have too much respect for those who live by the land to support this bill which does nothing to reform our farm programs but soaks the American taxpayers—both those who farm for a living and those who do not—with a deluge of unrelated pork and wasteful spending.

TRIBUTE TO EXERCISE TIGER FOUNDATION

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Exercise Tiger Association, a National Commemorative Foundation. The Association bears the name of a little known World War II naval battle which claimed the lives of several hundred American servicemen.

"Exercise Tiger" was originally a practice operation, preparing for the upcoming D-Day invasion. On the morning of April 28th, 1944, German submarines stumbled upon the operation, proceeding to torpedo the mostly defenseless landing ships. Three of the landing ship tanks were sunk and 749 servicemen lost their lives.

The Exercise Tiger Association goes to great lengths to commemorate this engagement and honor the memory of the servicemen who lost their lives that day. The Association has a wreath tribute and ceremony each year. The annual ceremony recently became a national tribute, when wreaths were dropped simultaneously into both the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean, honoring veterans nationwide.

Under the leadership of Walter Domanski, the National Director, this organization has also awarded veterans, servicemen, and other noteworthy individuals with numerous accolades, honoring service and sacrifice to our country.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Walter Domanski and the Exercise Tiger Association for honoring our Nation's brave men and women of the Armed Forces and for providing the opportunity to embrace the memory of the lives lost on that day in 1944.

HONORING OUR VETERANS BY EXPANDING THE GI BILL

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I strongly support the passage of H.R. 5740, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act. This bipartisan legislation, introduced by my friend and fellow Arizonan, Representative HARRY MITCHELL, modernizes the "GI Bill" and provides expanded educational benefits for our veterans.

Let there be no doubt about our iron-clad resolve to support our troops. As a nation, we are acutely aware of the extraordinary sacrifices they are making. I have seen it first-

hand in Baghdad and Bagram. We have a solemn responsibility to our service members, and one way to fulfill that responsibility is to help them prepare for life after they leave the military.

The first GI Bill was enacted more than 60 years ago for World War II veterans. It paid for the full cost of attending a public college, including tuition, fees, book purchases, and a monthly living stipend.

For example, in 1974, retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Bob Gent from Sierra Vista, Arizona, used his GI Bill benefits to obtain his B.A. from Arizona State University in math and computer science as well as a second degree 30 years later in astrophysics from the University of Texas.

Like Bob, over 7.8 million Americans who served our Nation have received a college education thanks to GI Bill. Unfortunately, the current Montgomery GI Bill does not fulfill the original GI Bill's promise—it does not adequately cover the cost of attending a four-year state college or university.

In 2003, Former Marine Corps Sergeant Tommy Mendoza from Sierra Vista served as an Infantry Mortarman in support of Army Special Operation Forces in Afghanistan. When he re-entered civilian life, Tommy had a difficult time finding a competitive job. He exhausted all of his GI Bill payments on a community college education.

The only option he has left is the Veterans Administration's Vocational Education and Rehabilitation Program. The current GI Bill fails to provide him adequate benefits to attain his college education.

Modernizing the GI Bill is an investment in our future. According to the Congressional Joint Economic Committee, for every \$1 the government invests in our veterans' education, approximately \$7 is generated in economic growth. GI Bill benefits also play an important role in military recruitment.

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act also creates a new program in which the government matches, dollar for dollar, any additional scholarships awarded to veterans from institutions within tuition costs above the maximum amount allowed by this legislation. In addition, veterans would have up to 15 years after leaving active duty, compared to ten years under the Montgomery GI Bill, to use their educational assistance benefits.

By voting to pass this legislation, we are demonstrating our deep, unwavering commitment to the brave men and women who fight to preserve our freedom.

STATEMENT FROM WESLEY E. DAVEY, MASTER SERGEANT IN THE ARMY RETIRED RESERVES

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, while I was back in the Fourth Congressional District of Minnesota, I met with Wes Davey, a constituent and master sergeant in the Army Retired Reserves. He fought in Operation Iraqi Freedom and is concerned about the funding of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As Congress begins to debate providing supplemental appropriations for

these wars, I would like to enter Wes's thoughtful words into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

ST. PAUL, MN,
May 2, 2008.

Hon. BETTY MCCOLLUM,
*Western Avenue North,
St. Paul, MN.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MCCOLLUM: The President has requested additional funding to continue the war in Iraq. Before the members of Congress approve this budget, they should consider doing three things.

First, increase taxes in order to at least partially pay for the current and future war funding requests. If these wars are in our national interest as President Bush and others have often told us, we should be willing to pay for them; if these wars are not in our national interest, we should get out of both countries.

It is wrong for our generation to pass off the entire Iraq and Afghanistan war debt to the future generations of taxpayers, and it is also wrong for President Bush and Congress to abrogate their fiscal responsibilities and expect future presidents and future members of Congress to sort out the funding mess from these wars.

Second, the United States Treasury should sell war bonds (as we did during WW2) to finance the portion of the war costs not funded by increased taxes. We need to stop borrowing money from foreign countries to finance our wars. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and China are not loaning us money because they have America's best interest at heart, and their economic influence in our country is already too great.

Third, Congress should set up a government internet website which explains in detail to the American public how the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been and will be financed. More specifically, where the money has come from, be it China, Saudi Arabia, or other countries, how much each foreign country has loaned us, at what interest rates, and exactly when and how those loans will be repaid.

Thus far in these wars, President Bush has done his very best to place an opaque window between war funding and the American public, which goes against the belief by the founders of our country that good government should transact its business in the open.

Sincerely,

WESLEY E. DAVEY.

FORECLOSURE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act, and I thank Chairman FRANK and Chairwoman WATERS for bringing this important legislation to the House floor.

Madam Speaker, we are all painfully aware of the fact that communities across the Nation are being devastated by the current housing crisis. The reforms in this legislation will help many homeowners stay in their homes and prevent a similar situation from happening again.

The problems caused by subprime and adjustable-rate mortgages are particularly acute

in California, which has the second highest foreclosure rate in the Nation. One in every 78 families is now facing foreclosure in my State. This legislation makes many important reforms to address the current crisis, and I would like to highlight two provisions which I believe are particularly critical for Californians.

First, the measure will expand the FHA program so that homeowners at risk of facing foreclosure can refinance into viable mortgages that are government-backed. Many of my constituents are facing ballooning payments on their mortgages which now far exceed the actual value of their homes. This measure will give them the opportunity to get their finances back on track and keep their homes.

Second, and perhaps most helpful to addressing the crisis in my home State, the legislation makes permanent the FHA loan limit and GSE conforming loan limits temporarily increased by the Economic Stimulus Act. The previous GSE conforming loan limit of \$417,000 and the FHA-insurable loan limit of \$362,000 simply were not high enough to be effective for high cost regions such as California, where the average cost of a home greatly exceeds the national average.

GSE and FHA backing of mortgages are key to ensuring access to affordable mortgages for many home buyers and homeowners. Permanently increasing loan limits is perhaps the single most important thing we can do to ensure that Californians can benefit from congressional efforts to address the mortgage crisis and have access to affordable, fixed-rate mortgages.

I urge my colleagues to do the right thing and vote in support of this legislation so that we can help our neighbors keep their homes and begin to revitalize our communities.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. ALFREDO
QUIÑONES-HINOJOSA

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of an extraordinary neurosurgeon, professor, mentor and hope-giver, Dr. Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa.

The New York Times, May 13, 2008, carried a story which described Dr. Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa's incredible journey from Mexicali, Mexico, to the world-renowned halls of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. His story is the story of America and what immigrants in every chapter of our history contribute to our Nation.

Below is the full text of the article:

A CONVERSATION WITH ALFREDO QUIÑONES-HINOJOSA: A SURGEON'S PATH FROM MIGRANT FIELDS TO OPERATING ROOM

(By Claudia Dreifus)

At the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa has four positions. He is a neurosurgeon who teaches oncology and neurosurgery, directs a neurosurgery clinic and heads a laboratory studying brain tumors. He also performs nearly 250 brain operations a year. Twenty years ago, Dr. Quiñones-Hinojosa, now 40, was an illegal immigrant working in the vegetable fields of the Central Valley in California. He became a citizen in 1997 while at Harvard.

Q. Where did you grow up?

A. Mexicali. My father had a small gas station. The family's stability vanished when there was a devaluation of the Mexican peso in the 1980s. My father lost the gas station, and we had no money for food. For a while, I sold hot dogs on the corner to help. As the economic crisis deepened, there seemed no possibility for any future in Mexico. I had big dreams and I wanted more education. So in 1987, when I was 19, I went up to the border between Mexicali and the United States and hopped the fence.

Some years later, I was sitting at a lunch table with colleagues at Harvard Medical School. Someone asked how I'd come to Harvard. "I hopped the fence," I said. Everyone laughed. They thought I was joking.

Q. After you crossed the border, what kind of work did you find?

A. I was a farm laborer in the San Joaquin Valley, seven days a week, sunup to sundown. I lived in this little trailer I paid \$300 a month for. It didn't take long to see that farm work was a dead end.

After a year of it, I moved to Stockton, where I found a job loading sulfur and fish lard onto railroad freight cars. My eyes burned from the sulfur, and my clothes smelled from fish lard, but it paid me enough so that I was able to go to night classes at San Joaquin Delta Community College. There, I met this wonderful human being, Norm Nichols, the speech and debate coach. He took me into his family and mentored me. Norm helped me apply for and get accepted to the University of California, Berkeley.

Once at Berkeley, I took a lot of math and science classes to up my G.P.A. Science and math are their own language. You didn't need to write in perfect English to do well in them. I pulled straight A's in science. In my senior year, someone told me to go see this guy, Hugo Mora, who helped Hispanics with science talent. I brought him my transcript and he said: "Wow! With grades like these, you should be at Harvard Medical School." That's how I got to Harvard. All along, I had much luck with mentors.

Q. Did you find Harvard tough?

A. Not really. Compared to working in the fields, it was easy. The question was what kind of doctor should I become? For a while, I thought I'd be a pediatric oncologist, because I wanted to help children. But then I thought, I'm good with my hands. Maybe I should do surgery.

One day, I was waltzing through Brigham and Women's Hospital and I saw Dr. Peter Black, the chairman of neurosurgery. I introduced myself, and he invited me that day to come to watch him do an operation. As it happened, he was doing an "awake" surgery, where the patient's brain is exposed and the patient is awake so that the surgeon can ask questions. As I watched that, I fell in love with brain surgery.

Q. What about it spoke to you?

A. Imagine, the most beautiful organ of our body, the one that we know least about, the one that makes us who we are, and it was in Dr. Black's hand. It was in front of me. It was pulsating! I realized I could work with my hands and touch this incredible organ, which is what I do now. I cannot conceive of a much more intimate relationship than that. A patient grants you the gift of trusting you with their lives, and there is no room for mistakes.

Dr. Peter Black, he was a very humble person. And he took me under his wing. So here again, I was very fortunate with mentorship.

Q. I'm told that you do something that not all surgeons do: you spend a lot of time with patients before an operation. Why?

A. I meet them several times, and their families. They don't know if they are going

to wake up after the operation. Not all the time am I successful. I do about 230 to 240 brain tumor operations a year. The majority make it. Some have complications. And some—2 to 3 percent—it takes a while for the patients to wake up. I need to meet everyone so that they know the risks. But getting to know these patients, it's the most painful part.

I was at a funeral yesterday. This was a 21-year-old man with a young wife, pregnant. Three surgeries, and the tumor kept growing and growing. And he told me, "There's no possible way I'll give up." He fought so hard. He trusted me with his life. Not once, several times. I owed him my presence.

Q. How do you handle such losses?

A. One of the ways I work it out is through research, the laboratory. I'm trying to learn about the causes of these recurring tumors. The patients, they can donate tissue, which we will examine.

My hypothesis is—and there are quite a few scientists who believe this—there are within these brain tumors a small subset of cells that can keep growing, even when you think you've taken them all out. We call them brain stem cells. They can keep making themselves, and they can make "daughter cells" that can become anything else in the brain. They have the ability to go to sleep for a little bit and then wake up and do it again. So we're trying to identify this small subset of cells we may be leaving behind when we make these beautiful surgeries.

Q. Have you actually found them?

A. Yes, but only in the laboratory. When we've found them, they may be a product of the experimental conditions of the laboratory. We haven't found them yet in live patients. The next challenge is to see if they truly exist in the human brain while the patient is alive.

Q. When you hear anti-immigrant expressions on talk radio and cable television, how do you feel?

A. It bothers me. Because I know what it was that drove me to jump the fence. It was poverty and frustration with a system that would have never allowed me to be who I am today.

As long as there is poverty in the rest of the world and we export our culture through movies and television, people who are hungry are going to come here. There's no way to stop it.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2419,
FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Conference Report on the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, and I would like to commend my colleague from Minnesota, Chairman PETERSON, for his tireless efforts. He is a champion for rural American and his leadership was essential for the success of this legislation.

The conference report—while not perfect—is a step in the right direction. This farm bill makes unprecedented investments in nutrition and conservation programs while also helping to address our Nation's energy crisis. In addition, this farm bill begins to scale back the commodity program by reducing spending on farmers who do not need the help.