

The Senator from Florida, Mr. LEMIEUX.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 99-498, as amended by Public Law 110-315, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, appoints the following individuals to the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance:

David Gruen of Wyoming.

William Luckey of Kentucky.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### THE TENACIOUS WARRIOR

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, America is about people. Who we are and what we are is because of the people who are Americans. They are individuals who have lived and died and influenced the rest of us because of their tenacious spirit and determination.

Madam Speaker, I am a history fan. I love American history. I also love Texas history. Not the history of dates and movements, but the history of the lives of individual Americans who have made a difference.

Roy Benavidez was one of those Americans. Roy Benavidez was born in south Texas in a small town called Cuero on August 5, 1935. He was the son of a sharecropper. He was an orphan, and he had mixed blood of Yaqui Indian and Hispanic. He was raised by his uncle after he lost his own family, and eventually he dropped out of school when he was 15. He was a migrant farm worker to take care of his family. He worked all over Texas and part of Colorado in the sugar beet fields and the cotton fields.

Eventually he decided to join the Texas National Guard and then the United States Army in 1955. He joined up in Houston, Texas. And in 1965, he was sent to Vietnam as a member of the 82nd Airborne.

While serving as an adviser to the South Vietnamese Army, he stepped on a land mine in South Vietnam. U.S. Army doctors at Brooke Army Medical Center told him he would never walk again. But he did walk. And not only that, he volunteered and returned back to Vietnam as a staff sergeant in the Army Special Forces; we call them the Green Berets.

On May 2, 1968, his life and the lives of his fellow troopers changed forever. It is a story that is almost unbelievable.

On the morning of May 2, 1968, a 12-man Special Forces team was inserted into Cambodia to observe a large-scale North Vietnamese troop movement. They were eventually discovered by the

enemy. Most of the team members were very close friends of Roy Benavidez, who was the forward operating officer in Loc Ninh, Vietnam.

Three helicopters were sent to rescue the 12-man team, but they were unable to land because of the heavy enemy concentration. When a second attempt was made to reach the stranded team, Benavidez jumped on board one of the helicopters armed only with a bowie knife.

As the helicopters reached the landing zone, Benavidez realized the team members were likely too severely wounded to move to the helicopters, so by himself he ran through heavy small-arms fire to the wounded soldiers. He was wounded himself in the leg, the face, and the head in the process. He reorganized the team and signaled helicopters to land. Despite his injuries, Benavidez was able to carry off half the wounded men to the helicopters. He then collected the classified documents held by a now-dead team leader. As he completed this task, he was wounded again by an exploding grenade in the back, and then he was shot in the stomach.

At that moment, the waiting helicopter pilot was also mortally wounded, and the helicopter crashed. Benavidez ran to collect the stunned crash survivors and form a perimeter. He directed air support. He ordered another extraction attempt, and was wounded again when shot in the thigh. At this point he was losing so much blood from his face wounds that his vision became blurred. Finally, another helicopter landed and as Benavidez carried a wounded friend to it, he was clubbed in the head with a rifle butt by an enemy soldier and then bayoneted twice.

Madam Speaker, Benavidez was wounded in that one battle in that one day 37 times. He had seven gunshot wounds, he had mortar fragments in his back, and two bayonet wounds. But he saved the lives of eight of his fellow troopers.

Later he was presumed dead and zipped up in a body bag; but right before they zipped up the bag, he spit in the doctor's face letting the doctor know yes, he was still alive. Amazing people, these young guns of the Green Berets.

Madam Speaker, this is a photograph of Master Sergeant Roy Benavidez. He eventually recovered from all of those wounds and received the Distinguished Service Cross, and many years later Ronald Reagan presented him with the medal he wears around his neck in this photograph, the Congressional Medal of Honor. President Reagan stated here in Washington, D.C., on presentation of that medal that if this were a movie, no one would really believe it could ever happen. What Roy Benavidez did that day is unbelievable. I will insert the Medal of Honor citation for Roy Benavidez.

After he retired from the military, this seventh-grade dropout went

around America talking about the importance of education. He talked to young gang members, he talked to the Hispanic youth, telling them to stay in school and get an education. He was an amazing individual. A Navy ship has been named after him. Several elementary schools in Texas have been named after Master Sergeant Roy Benavidez, and even a toy company has issued the Roy Benavidez G.I. Joe action figure.

□ 1915

In Texas there are a disproportionately high number of Hispanic Americans who volunteer for the military. They are American Patriots. Some legal immigrants even join and serve in Iraq and Afghanistan in the hope they will become U.S. citizens. Madam Speaker, as we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, one of those great Hispanic Americans was Roy Benavidez, and he lived the American dream the way he wanted to.

And that's just the way it is.

BENAVIDEZ, ROY P.

Citation: Master Sergeant (then Staff Sergeant) Roy P. Benavidez United States Army, who distinguished himself by a series of daring and extremely valorous actions on 2 May 1968 while assigned to Detachment B56, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, Republic of Vietnam. On the morning of 2 May 1968, a 12-man Special Forces Reconnaissance Team was inserted by helicopters in a dense jungle area west of Loc Ninh, Vietnam to gather intelligence information about confirmed large-scale enemy activity. This area was controlled and routinely patrolled by the North Vietnamese Army. After a short period of time on the ground, the team met heavy enemy resistance, and requested emergency extraction. Three helicopters attempted extraction, but were unable to land due to intense enemy small arms and anti-aircraft fire. Sergeant Benavidez was at the Forward Operating Base in Loc Ninh monitoring the operation by radio when these helicopters returned to off-load wounded crewmembers and to assess aircraft damage. Sergeant Benavidez voluntarily boarded a returning aircraft to assist in another extraction attempt. Realizing that all the team members were either dead or wounded and unable to move to the pick-up zone, he directed the aircraft to a nearby clearing where he jumped from the hovering helicopter, and ran approximately 75 meters under withering small arms fire to the crippled team. Prior to reaching the team's position he was wounded in his right leg, face, and head. Despite these painful injuries, he took charge, repositioning the team members and directing their fire to facilitate the landing of an extraction aircraft, and the loading of wounded and dead team members. He then threw smoke canisters to direct the aircraft to the team's position. Despite his severe wounds and under intense enemy fire, he carried and dragged half of the wounded team members to the awaiting aircraft. He then provided protective fire by running alongside the aircraft as it moved to pick up the remaining team members. As the enemy's fire intensified, he hurried to recover the body and classified documents on the dead team leader. When he reached the leader's body, Sergeant Benavidez was severely wounded by small arms fire in the abdomen and grenade fragments in his back. At nearly the same moment, the aircraft pilot was mortally wounded, and his helicopter crashed. Although in extremely critical condition due to his multiple wounds, Sergeant

Benavidez secured the classified documents and made his way back to the wreckage, where he aided the wounded out of the overturned aircraft, and gathered the stunned survivors into a defensive perimeter. Under increasing enemy automatic weapons and grenade fire, he moved around the perimeter distributing water and ammunition to his weary men, re-instilling in them a will to live and fight. Facing a buildup of enemy opposition with a beleaguered team, Sergeant Benavidez mustered his strength, began calling in tactical air strikes and directed the fire from supporting gunships to suppress the enemy's fire and so permit another extraction attempt. He was wounded again in his thigh by small arms fire while administering first aid to a wounded team member just before another extraction helicopter was able to land. His indomitable spirit kept him going as he began to ferry his comrades to the craft. On his second trip with the wounded, he was clubbed from additional wounds to his head and arms before killing his adversary. He then continued under devastating fire to carry the wounded to the helicopter. Upon reaching the aircraft, he spotted and killed two enemy soldiers who were rushing the craft from an angle that prevented the aircraft door gunner from firing upon them. With little strength remaining, he made one last trip to the perimeter to ensure that all classified material had been collected or destroyed, and to bring in the remaining wounded. Only then, in extremely serious condition from numerous wounds and loss of blood, did he allow himself to be pulled into the extraction aircraft. Sergeant Benavidez' gallant choice to join voluntarily his comrades who were in critical straits, to expose himself constantly to withering enemy fire, and his refusal to be stopped despite numerous severe wounds, saved the lives of at least eight men. His fearless personal leadership, tenacious devotion to duty, and extremely valorous actions in the face of overwhelming odds were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and reflect the utmost credit on him and the United States Army.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY 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 North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

#### REMEMBERING FALLEN HEROES

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

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor 10 brave Americans who gave their lives in Afghanistan on October 26. After executing a flawless counternarcotics/counterinsurgency operation in Darreh-ye Bom Bazaar in Badghis Province in western Afghanistan, Drug Enforcement Administration Special

Agents Forrest Leamon, Chad Michael and Michael Weston were tragically killed when their Chinook helicopter crashed. Seven American soldiers were also lost in the crash and 26 more were injured.

Special Agents Weston, Leamon and Michael were serving as part of DEA's Foreign-deployed Advisory and Support Team (FAST), working in conjunction with the U.S. military, the Afghan National Army and counternarcotics police of Afghanistan to take down and dismantle major drug trafficking organizations supporting al Qaeda and the Taliban. The operation took place in a major drug bazaar just northeast of Herat City where known insurgents and opium traffickers frequently operate. Despite taking hostile fire, the operation resulted in the seizure of a very large amount of drugs, weapons, IED materials and pressure plates.

During the extraction of members from the site, one Chinook helicopter with 36 personnel aboard crashed, resulting in the deaths of 10 personnel, including the three DEA special agents. Early reports indicate that several of the survivors performed heroic and selfless acts of bravery to rescue their injured comrades from the downed Chinook.

Early this morning, the remains of these 10 brave men returned to Dover Air Force Base. I want to thank President Obama, Attorney General Holder and DEA Administrator Michele Leonhart for their presence on the tarmac as the caskets of our fallen heroes were carried off the plane by a military honor guard at 3:30 this morning. I also want to thank special agent in charge of Afghanistan and Pakistan, Michael Marsac, for caring for them.

For the DEA, these are the first casualties suffered since FAST team operations began in 2005. For such a close-knit organization, the loss of three agents is devastating. The importance of their mission in Afghanistan cannot be understated. Just a week ago, the U.N. issued a report showing that the Taliban makes more money off the drug trade than it did when they ruled Afghanistan and effectively cornered the market for opium. Today I think it is important that the House take a moment to reflect on these three men who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Special Agent Michael Weston grew up in Pennsylvania and California, earning degrees in computer science and economics from Stanford University in 1994 and a juris doctor from Harvard Law School in 1997. As a major in the Marine Corps Reserve, he served in Iraq, Norway and the Panama Canal Zone. Agent Weston joined the DEA in 2003, serving in the Richmond, Virginia, district office until he volunteered to deploy to Kabul to serve the DEA Kabul country office. The 37-year-old Weston is survived by his wife Cynthia Tidler, his mother Judy Zarit, his father Steven Weston, and his brother Thomas Weston.

Special Agent Forrest Leamon grew up in Ukiah, California. He served in the United States Navy for 9 years as a cryptologic technician, earning awards for his service in Southwest Asia and Bosnia. He joined DEA in 2002, serving in the Washington and El Paso field divisions before volunteering to serve on a FAST team in Afghanistan in 2007. Agent Leamon first served multiple FAST team tours in Afghanistan over the last 2 years. He is survived by his wife Ana Lopez Valdenea and their unborn child, his parents Sue and Richard Leamon, and his sister Heather.

Special Agent Chad Michael grew up in Muncy and Hughesville, Pennsylvania. He graduated from St. Leo University in Florida with a degree of criminal justice. After 3 years with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office in Tampa, Florida, he joined DEA in 2004. Agent Michael served with distinction in the Miami field division before volunteering to serve with a FAST team in Afghanistan in September. Agent Michael was 30 years old and is survived by his mother Debra Hartz, his stepfather Leo Hartz, his brother, Eric Michael, and his fiancée Paola.

Madam Speaker, our thoughts go with these families. We know we've lost many military personnel, but this is new and heavy casualties for the DEA and their families who have all given their lives in the service of the United States, her allies and our objectives in Afghanistan.

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

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His 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.)

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.)

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.