

But it doesn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. Because Project Medishare has been engaged in health and development work in Haiti for over 15 years, they were able to quickly grow their emergency response efforts across all of Haiti. They were able to expand their longstanding programs in Cap Haitien and in the central plateau to care for earthquake-injured individuals who had left the capital city to be with their families elsewhere.

Similarly, because the UM Global Institute has been working in Haiti for nearly 40 years now, it is uniquely positioned to work with the Government of Haiti, the U.S. military and other organizations to help organize medical teams on the ground and implement field hospital plans around the capital city.

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Notably, Project Medishare is also making an effort to integrate medical staff with the Haitian Ministry of Health and other local Haitian doctors and nurses in an effort to better train each other.

As Dr. Green himself explained, "We're beginning to train our Haitian colleagues so, when we hand off these hospitals in the next couple of months, they'll be there forever. We're not rebuilding Haiti the way it was; we're rebuilding a different Haiti."

Dr. Green has also said that they plan to leave with your colleagues in Haiti every piece of the transported equipment used for their relief efforts. This will help to transition the immediate relief assistance they have provided into real, longstanding, sustainable progress for the people of Haiti.

I was so proud to coordinate Dr. Green's efforts with our U.S. military personnel on the ground and in my district at the U.S. Southern Command. I applaud the many individuals who have participated in the relief efforts headed by Dr. Green, by the University of Miami, by the Global Institute's Project Medishare, and by the U.M. Miller School of Medicine. The work of private individuals and organizations such as these is key to the broader U.S. response to the crisis in Haiti.

Again, I would like to recognize the tremendous contributions made by Dr. Green and his partners at the University of Miami, especially U.M. President Donna Shalala, to the relief efforts in Haiti. My sincere gratitude for their selfless dedication to this cause. Congratulations, U.M.; congratulations, Mr. Barth Green.

RECOGNIZING MINNESOTA'S 34TH INFANTRY

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, the amount of sacrifice given to this Nation by those serving in our Armed Forces is truly inspiring. American

men and women in uniform are a remarkable symbol for our country, and we are truly proud of their dedication.

The Minnesota National Guard's 34th Infantry Division, known as the Red Bulls, have served our State and our country with honor and are truly the best our Nation has to offer. Their dedication to ensure freedom has been a momentous task, and they continue to succeed with utmost bravery.

This responsibility is no small task. Indeed, ensuring democracy in a fragile state is something that takes courage and trust.

Most recently, more than 1,000 members of the Red Bulls were deployed to Basra, Iraq, where they took command of 14,000 troops in nine of Iraq's 18 provinces. After serving long hours and giving up days and years of their lives, the Red Bulls have finally returned home to Minnesota, and it was a joyous occasion. Families and friends were reunited after serving our country and representing our State. These heroes took part in the Minnesota National Guard's nationally recognized "Return to Yellow Ribbon" reintegration program which helps soldiers ease back into everyday life.

To give thanks for their extended service, in January 2007, the Post-Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence program, PDMRA, was implemented to offer extra pay for those who served extended time overseas during deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But despite this promise, more than 23,000 troops did not receive the benefits they were promised due to the bureaucracy and the red tape within the Department of Defense. Troops that were owed thousands of dollars, they didn't see a dime. This was entirely unacceptable. This type of delay, whatever the excuse, was certainly outrageous. And although this was not a new issue, I was proud to work on this issue as soon as I arrived in Congress. In fact, the effort was led by Representatives JOHN KLINE and TIM WALZ from Minnesota, along with the rest of the Minnesota delegation, and Representative BRUCE BRALEY from Iowa, whose tireless work on this issue should not go unnoticed.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to our veterans' issues, partisan politics are not an option. We all share a common goal in Congress to support our troops, and have worked together to ensure that those who serve our Nation get the respect and the recognition that they deserve.

While we authored legislation that would have provided an immediate fix for this issue, a major hurdle was that many Members of Congress did not know the problem ever existed. Despite the fact that 19 States had 500 or more constituents who had not received money, many Members were unfortunately unaware, which was a major hurdle in passing this legislation. And so we made it our mission personally to educate Members of Congress about the problem, and we tried to raise awareness about the issue.

We also sent numerous letters to the Defense Appropriation and authorization committees so we could begin to address the problem in Congress, while thousands, in the meantime, continued to wait for the DOD to act. In the House, we were successful in getting language in the Defense authorization bill, and we got money allocated in the Defense appropriation bill. Unfortunately, the Senate authorization bill had language to fix the problem but their appropriations bill did not include the funding. Sadly, after all of our efforts, the final Defense appropriations bill that the President signed into law did not contain the funding that was needed to provide the fix to this problem for our troops.

But we kept on fighting. We did not give up, and the issue was raised in a question by Representative KLINE to Defense Secretary Gates during a House Armed Services Committee hearing recently, and it was just shortly after that the Department of Defense announced it was changing its policy and that they would end these burdensome regulations in order for the soldiers to get the money that they were promised a long time ago.

So I am proud to report that now the first checks have been mailed out to our deserving troops. The Red Bulls, without a doubt, deserve every dollar they will be receiving after this 3-year wait. I want to take this opportunity to thank them again for their service and pledge to them that we will fight to make sure that a similar situation never happens again in the future.

HONORING THREE PENNSYLVANIANS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, some say that America is successful because of what we do here in Washington. I couldn't disagree more. America is successful because of her citizens. And tonight, I want to share and talk about and recognize three such individuals from Clinton County, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, the first is Donald Mellott. On Friday, February 12, 2010, veteran fire policeman Donald G. Mellott made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty while serving the citizens and communities of Clinton County, Pennsylvania. Mr. Mellott tragically lost his life while working to control the traffic scene of a two-vehicle crash on Lusk Run in Bald Eagle Township.

A long-time public servant in Clinton County, he most recently served as captain of the Woolrich Fire Police Association. Captain Mellott was instrumental in shaping the future of the Clinton County Fire Police Association.

He began his public service at the age of 16 and served his communities for 46

years. His involvement originated in his home community of Flemington, and he has been an active member of the Lock Haven Citizens, Dunnstown, and Woolrich fire departments. He was also involved in public service as a member of the local Masonic Lodge.

Captain Donald Mellott's life embodies that of a true American hero. He lived and served with a commitment to making a difference in the lives of both his neighbors and complete strangers. He sacrificed personally, missing family time, meals, and full nights of rest when called upon to serve those in need.

While we mourn the loss of this American hero, we celebrate his lifetime record of service and his principles of public service. The families of all fire and emergency personnel share in the service and sacrifices of their loved ones. To the Mellott family, please know that I am keeping you in my prayers during this very difficult time.

The second individual, Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor today is Jerry Updegraff, who has spent 20 years raising funds to advance the causes of Lock Haven University in Pennsylvania.

He plans to retire with a balance sheet of more than \$40 million in contributions and other income that has come to the university during his tenure as executive director of the Lock Haven University Foundation.

Jerry represented the university on the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education and was past chair of the Clinton County Economic Partnership. Last month, he received a lifetime service award from CASE for his contributions to higher education over the course of his 42-year career.

I also know him as a former member of the executive board of the Susquehanna Council of the Boy Scouts of America, where he served with honor.

Prior to joining Lock Haven, Jerry had public relations and fundraising responsibilities at the University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University, and the University of Charleston.

Jerry recently surpassed the \$10 million fundraising goal in Lock Haven University's capital campaign by helping to raise \$11.6 million. We thank Jerry for his dedication and his outstanding service to Lock Haven, and wish him well on his retirement.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I recognize Lock Haven University President Keith T. Miller. Keith has been an outstanding representative for the college. Enrollment has grown under his tenure, as has the honors program. Lock Haven has achieved All-Steinway status and qualified for National Science Foundation grants since Dr. Miller arrived in 2004.

He is a warm individual whose dedication to the school was always in evidence. He never stopped promoting and believing in the mission of the university. I am pleased for Dr. Miller that he is going to assume the reins of Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia, in July. Their gain is our loss.

Before Lock Haven, Miller was provost and vice chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, dean of the College of Business at Niagara University in New York, and associate dean of the School of Business at Quinnipiac College in Hamden, Connecticut.

He holds a bachelor's, a master's, and a Ph.D. from the University of Arizona, but he has also worked in sales for Proctor & Gamble. He counted that as good experience for teaching business. I can continue to describe his distinguished career and many attributes, but suffice it to say that Lock Haven and Lock Haven University will miss Dr. Miller, as will I.

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.)

HEALTH CARE TAKEOVER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to join you, my colleagues, and those gathered in various places around the buildings here near the Capitol.

I have had the opportunity, having served in government as a legislator for a number of years, to serve both in the majority, in the minority, but also in the wilderness. This last year and a half has been different; I have served in the wilderness because we have actually come up to the edge of the abyss with a piece of legislation that promises to be so threatening and so destructive to our country that should we decide to swallow this poison pill and pass this piece of legislation, America will never be the same.

I have seen, in the majority and in the minority, pieces of legislation which are harmful and that may be poor solutions to some particular problem or solutions to a problem that doesn't exist or excuses just to have more taxes and more government control, but we have never quite seen a threat like the threat that confronts America today, and we, you and I, my friends, who love the red, white, and blue, are looking off the edge.

I don't know if you have ever stood on the edge of the rim of the Grand Canyon and looked thousands of feet downward, or if you have ever been on the top of some high skyscraper or bridge and looked off into empty space, but that is where we stand tonight. That is where we stand this week or next week in America. We are standing looking into the abyss, into a piece of legislation which is quite possibly

going to be passed. And if it is passed, it will leave our Nation very, very weak, much weaker and unlike anything that we have seen before.

It threatens to do two major things: to destroy the quality of health care in America, and to destroy the fiscal integrity of our very country. I am talking, of course, about an old topic, a topic that has been debated now for more than half a year here in Congress. It has absorbed the attention of the Nation, and it is an interesting topic because the more that it has been around, it seems the more the public is aware of it, and the more they see of it, the more they don't like it. In fact, as you start to take the covers off the legislation on health care, it becomes a very ugly picture, and the American public is wise. In fact, the statistical information suggests that at least 20 percent more Americans believe that we would be better not passing this piece of legislation and a great majority think we should just scrap it and start over again by systematically defining a problem and fixing it rather than having government take over all of health care.

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Now, the process, the way that the legislature works historically has been so boring that none of the American public pay any attention to it, but that has changed since we have been in the days of looking into the abyss, the abyss of the destruction of health care and the destruction of our economy. And people are becoming conscious of how it is that bills are passed and how they become law.

What would be required to have this health care bill passed would be a process that people call reconciliation. What that means essentially is that the bill would end-run or bypass a safety process in the U.S. Senate. The U.S. Senate has a very conservative way of operating, and that is that you can have a bill that you have 51 Senators who would vote for it—so it would pass if you had a chance to vote on it—but they put this extra caveat, that you have to have 60 Senators agree to bring it up for a vote. So in a sense, everything in the Senate requires a 60 percent approval before it goes to a final vote.

Now, there is an exception to that, and that is because of the necessity of dealing with the budget and spending and taxing and some of those issues, that on certain financial kinds of transactions, because of the fact that we can't afford a gridlock, we allow a 50-vote majority to be able to move something along, and that's called reconciliation. But it is not a process that is typically used for a completely new bill on a very broad subject, which is not just specifically a financial kind of thing.

We have this quote from our President on this subject of reconciliation, he says, "Reconciliation is, therefore, the wrong place for policy changes."