

clean water and clean air—which every person on this planet has an interest in protecting. In the United States, protections over waters and wetlands are essential to ensuring a long-term, sustainable water supply for the American people. When rivers and streams are placed at risk of pollution, many cities and communities which depend on these water bodies for sources of drinking water are equally placed at risk.

Additionally, clean air is one of the most basic necessities of life, and pollutants in our air can have devastating effects on both our health and our environment. Numerous studies that have shown that air pollution can cause respiratory and cardiovascular problems as well as result in asthma and other long-term and chronic health conditions. We must work to ensure that our air is clean and not polluted for the betterment of all people.

Madam Speaker, truly, the coming generations deserve to inherit a healthy planet with clean drinking water and clean air, and it is up to us to ensure that they do. I encourage all of our citizens to take a moment on this holiday to reflect on what they can do as individuals to help the environment, not just for us, but for people around the world as well. I ask my fellow colleagues to join me today in supporting this resolution that recognizes Earth Day and will help raise awareness for the need to protect our environment.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 255, to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day and to honor its founder, Senator Gaylord Nelson from Wisconsin. I was in Congress in 1969 when Senator Nelson proposed a national teach-in so that people across the country could show their elected officials that they wanted environmental protections to be included in the national agenda. The following spring, it is estimated that nearly 20 million Americans participated in environmental awareness and education events in schools and communities across the country on the first Earth Day. Like the civil rights movement and antiwar movement earlier that decade, this grassroots movement brought this issue to the forefront, and impacted the national political agenda.

Our country has made great strides in protecting our environment in the past 40 years. The Environmental Protection Agency was founded, and several historic bills including the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act were passed to address pollution and environmental degradation. Since then, the Federal Government has instituted additional measures to protect our air, land, food, water and homes from chemicals, waste and pollution.

The 111th Congress has continued this legacy to preserve and protect our resources by focusing on increasing energy efficiency. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act invested billions of dollars in clean energy, green jobs and the research and development of innovative equipment, including advanced battery technology. I was proud to support the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, which would reduce pollution and ensure that our country becomes more energy independent by utilizing renewable energy and domestic alternatives to foreign oil.

While much progress has been made, many of the environmental issues that worried Senator Nelson still exist and new ones have emerged. Additionally, it is common to see the

devastating impacts of environmental degradation in low-income urban and rural communities, where residents face health issues related to industrialization and the mismanagement of waste.

I encourage all Americans to take small steps to make their households, places of work and neighborhoods more environmentally friendly. I look forward to working with my colleagues on policy that echo Senator Nelson's mission of improving the health of environment so that our air, land and water are protected for future generations, regardless of where they live.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day and, in particular, to honor Earth Day's Founder, the late Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-WI), whom I am proud to say chose to spend the latter part of his career in my hometown of Kensington, MD.

Senator Nelson's public service spanned more than three decades, including two terms as Governor and three terms as Senator from the state of Wisconsin. Although active on issues ranging from civil rights to consumer protection to the Vietnam War, Senator Nelson was perhaps best known for his pioneering advocacy on behalf of the environment. He cosponsored the 1964 Wilderness Act, and successfully fought for legislation protecting the Appalachian Trail, banning DDT and curtailing phosphate detergent.

In 1970, Senator Nelson's call for a day of education and action on behalf of the environment drew 20 million people from across the United States to participate in the very first Earth Day. Since then, Earth Day has grown to become an international event involving 500 million people from 175 countries around the world.

After leaving the Senate in 1981, Senator Nelson joined the Wilderness Society as its first Chairman and continued to serve the organization until shortly before his passing in 2005. Senator Nelson received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Clinton in 1995 and was recognized along with President Teddy Roosevelt as one of the two most important political figures of the 20th Century by the Audubon Society. He was an extraordinary public servant, who was famously well liked by colleagues from across the political spectrum.

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day tomorrow, it is fitting that we pause to remember the vision of its remarkable founder Gaylord Nelson and recommit ourselves to the necessity of a healthy and sustainable environment that was his life's work.

Mr. FLAKE. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I would just like to echo the words of the great leaders from Wisconsin who have spoken already on this. We are indeed stewards. Earth Day should be something we celebrate every day. And this, the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, is a great time to start.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 255, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SILVER STAR SERVICE BANNER DAY

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 855) expressing support for designation of May 1 as "Silver Star Service Banner Day".

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 855

Whereas the House of Representatives has always honored the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces;

Whereas the Silver Star Service Banner has come to represent the members of the Armed Forces and veterans who were wounded or became ill in combat in the wars fought by the United States;

Whereas the Silver Star Families of America was formed to help the American people remember the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces by designing and manufacturing Silver Star Service Banners and Flags for that purpose;

Whereas the sole mission of the Silver Star Families of America is to evoke memories of the sacrifices of members and veterans of the Armed Forces on behalf of the United States through the presence of a Silver Star Service Banner in a window or a Silver Star Flag flying;

Whereas the sacrifices of members and veterans of the Armed Forces on behalf of the United States should never be forgotten; and

Whereas May 1 would be an appropriate date to designate as "Silver Star Service Banner Day": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports the designation of "Silver Star Service Banner Day" and calls upon the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) will each control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. SPEIER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 855, a bill supporting Silver Star Service Banner Day. H. Res. 855 was introduced by my colleague, the gentleman from Missouri, Representative ROY BLUNT, on October 22, 2009. The measure was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government

Reform, which reported it favorably by unanimous consent on April 14 of this year. The measure enjoys the support of over 50 cosponsors.

Madam Speaker, our Nation continues to face two long and difficult wars, and I am very glad that we can take time now to honor the men and women of our Armed Services. They deserve our thoughts, our prayers, and our support.

The Silver Star Families of America understand this well and work hard to help the American people recognize the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces. Tens of thousands of American troops are fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, risking their lives in service to our country. They also risk their lives in deployments throughout the world. I ask my colleagues to join me in giving thanks to them and to their families for the sacrifices they continue to make and for their service to our country.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman from Arizona for yielding time.

Madam Speaker, I thank the committee for reporting this resolution to the floor. I want to recognize, along with my other colleagues, the Silver Star Families of America. This bill does that. It designates the 1st of May as Silver Star Service Banner Day.

Silver Star Families of America is not only reflective of all the families that have helped, but it is also a non-profit organization that has been formed dedicated to supporting and assisting those whose families have earned the Silver Star, those who have been wounded, those who have become ill in a combat zone, recognizing those members of the Armed Forces and their families across all branches of the services, and Madam Speaker, for all wars.

This group was founded in Missouri's Seventh Congressional District in 2004. The Silver Star Flag and the Silver Star Banner are symbols of remembrance and honor for those wounded during battle, those who incurred an illness during battle, and those who have honorably served in the Armed Forces during that moment of sacrifice, and a sacrifice that is almost always shared by their family and their loved ones.

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Thousands of cities and counties throughout the country have issued proclamations to set aside May 1 to honor our current troops, our veterans and their families, as well as Silver Star families and Gold Star families.

Last April, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, recognized Silver Star families of America for their support of service-members and those who have earned the Silver Star.

Madam Speaker, I thank the committee for bringing this to the floor. I ask my colleagues to join me in support of House Resolution 855 which, of course, is a resolution in support of those service people and their families who have earned this recognition, who show this banner, who understand the implications of the Silver Star flag and the Silver Star banner.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the great leader.

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, as an original cosponsor, I rise today in support of H. Res. 855, a resolution that expresses our Nation's appreciation for the sacrifices that have been made by so many dedicated servicemen and -women who've worn the uniform of the United States.

It's no small thing to raise one's hand and swear to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, and it's the responsibility of every American to recognize that service-members who have been wounded or become ill in the line of duty have paid an especially high price for our freedoms.

I make it a point to visit service-members who are recovering at Walter Reed, and I know so many of my colleagues do just the same. Oftentimes, a spouse or a parent is there lending support and anxious to take their loved one home. I'm humbled by the strength and character of these servicemembers and their caregivers.

The Silver Star Families of America deserves recognition for the tremendous job its members do in reminding us of the debt of gratitude our Nation owes to wounded and ill servicemembers, veterans, and their families. By supporting the designation of May 1 as Silver Star Service Banner Day, Members of the House add the collective voice to this body of good works.

I thank my colleague and my friend, ROY BLUNT, for introducing this resolution.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLAKE. If the gentlelady has no additional speakers, I'm prepared to close.

Madam Speaker, it's important for us to take a moment to extend our gratitude to our loved ones who have endured the grief of losing loved ones, those brave soldiers in the battlefield who become wounded or sick. And I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) for his comments. We're all grateful for the Silver Star Families of America, for their devotion, dedication to keeping us all aware of the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the armed services.

I ask all Members to support this resolution supporting Silver Star Service Banner Day.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 855, expressing support for the designation of May 1st as 'Silver Star Service Banner Day'.

Recognizing all of our service members throughout the year is our privilege and design-

nating May 1, 2010 as Silver Star Service Banner Day is an additional way to honor the wounded and ill members of our Armed Forces.

The Silver Star Families of America, a non-profit organization, is dedicated to keeping the memories of these hero's sacrifices in the hearts and minds of all of us through the presence of a Silver Star displayed in a window or the Service Flag flying for all to see.

It is important for us to take a moment to extend our gratitude to their loved ones who have endured the grief of losing a loved one or the difficulty of caring for these brave soldiers as the Silver Star Families do.

Those who have been wounded or have died are members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard. They deserve our continued gratitude for all that they have given on our behalf. To this end, the Silver Star Service Banner has come to represent their bravery.

We are grateful to the Silver Star Families of America for their devotion and dedication to keeping all of us aware of the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces, therefore, I ask all members to join me in supporting May 1, 2010 as Silver Star Service Banner Day.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I had the privilege, and I call it a privilege, earlier this year to travel to Kuwait, Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and then to Germany, where I had the privilege of meeting our troops who are committed, passionate, have an incredible love of country, and then to visit those wounded warriors at our facility in Germany. And I must say that there's nothing like having that interpersonal connection, that opportunity to make us realize the extraordinary sacrifices that are being made every single day.

So it is fitting that we have this resolution before us, and I urge all my colleagues to support this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 855, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES FOR VICTIMS OF TESORO REFINERY FIRE IN ANACORTES, WASHINGTON

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1262) expressing condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of the victims of the fire at the Tesoro refinery in Anacortes, Washington.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows: