

After 24 years of service to the City of Champaign, Mrs. Bridgewater served on a variety of boards and committees. Throughout her life she received many honors, among them the Living Legend Award, Martin Luther King Day Award and the National Council of Negro Woman, along with a mini park named in her honor on the corner of Bradley and Market Street in Champaign.

Because of her dedication to the community and the lives she touched, I am proud to honor the life and accomplishments of Mrs. Erma Scott Bridgewater.

RECOGNIZING LA-Z-BOY
INCORPORATED

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 14, 2013

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of an iconic company in my district, La-Z-Boy Incorporated, and to congratulate them as they begin construction on their new world headquarters next week.

Based in Monroe, MI, La-Z-Boy has been crafting comfortable, quality furniture since 1927. The vision of two cousins, Edward M. Knabusch and Edwin J. Shoemaker, La-Z-Boy started with the success of their innovative reclining wooden slat chair. From their humble beginnings in Edward's father's garage they quickly evolved their company with new products like the first upholstered reclining chair. The company grew and they built their own factory on Telegraph Road to meet demand, where they've been a part of the community for the last 85 years.

With the exception of a break during World War II to make tank seats and crash pads as part of the war effort, the employees of La-Z-Boy have never stopped producing a myriad of products that are well-known across the globe. With an accredited test lab on site, every product coming off the line meets the high standards of the La-Z-Boy brand. Just imagine how many sports fans those recliners have comforted or the countless babies they've rocked to sleep.

On June 20th, La-Z-Boy will hold a groundbreaking ceremony for their new world headquarters, as the company enters its next phase. The environmentally friendly building will be able to support 500 employees who will no doubt continue making quality furniture for every room in the home. I offer my best wishes to my constituents and friends at La-Z-Boy and encourage them to keep making this world a more comfortable place.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FATHERS ON
FATHER'S DAY

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 14, 2013

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, as we recognize Father's Day 2013, probably never before has fatherhood been so challenged. Some sobering facts reveal a crisis that cannot and should not be ignored. Today, 29% of Caucasian,

53% Hispanic and 73% African-American children are born out of wedlock. The traditional position of fathers in American society and in the family as an institution is in serious trouble.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported there are an estimated 70.1 million fathers across the nation; 24.7 million of those fathers have children under the age of 18 whom are living in single parent homes. Not having a father has serious economic consequences. Fatherless households account for 47% of our poverty rate and 90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes according to the U.S. Census Bureau Reports. With no father present, 85% of children possess behavioral problems, which is twenty times the national average, Center for Disease Control reported. Additionally, 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes, a National Principals Association Report found. Today, 63% of youth suicides come from fatherless homes, the U.S. Department of Health observed. As we reflect on the state of fatherhood in America, these troubling figures indicate the importance of fathers for children's development, well-being and stability in society.

While white males face a challenging role, the fatherhood role of their African-American counterparts has been dramatically eroded. A recent examination by the National Fatherhood Initiative revealed that African-American newborns today are seriously disadvantaged. White men have a less than 6% lifetime chance of going to prison; African-American men have a 32% chance, according to 2001 figures from the U.S. Department of Justice. Today, half of all children and 80% of African-American children can expect to spend at least part of their childhood living apart from their fathers.

These staggering figures portray a role model absence in our society that is detrimental to our nation's youth. We must understand the consequences that result from denying our children a proper upbringing. Although Father's Day is a time to celebrate and rejoice with our loved ones, we cannot forget about the increasing number of our children that are being raised without a father. Children growing up without a father are more likely to have behavioral problems and be incarcerated. Those children are less likely to attend college, become married and form healthy relationships.

Unfortunately this trend has become prevalent in our communities. As a result, this problem has become repetitive through generations at an alarming rate. We must work to raise awareness of the effects fatherhood has on a child's life. We must also find ways to stem the decline of meaningful relationships between a father and his child in our society.

In a commentary on The Importance of a Loving Father by Dr. Walter E. Barker, a Florida licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Dr. Barker stated, "Fathers are very important to their sons" and daughters' development. A mother gives the child unconditional love and acceptance and the father's love is more conditional on the child's finding success and accomplishment out in the larger world. He wants his children to find what makes them happy and then take that gift and talent to make a contribution to the larger society. Fathers want their children to have a strong work ethic and to be willing to assert themselves in the world.

By supporting the family structure, better education and job training, we can begin to reverse the diminished role of fathers in our country. We must all work to help raise awareness on the pressing issue. The importance of fatherhood should not be overlooked by our society if we are to insure a promising future for the children in America.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1960) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I rise today to express my appreciation for the House Armed Services Committee's acceptance of my amendment on the importance of foreign language and cultural education in the military. While the concept of military-to-military engagement is not new, it has an increasing level of importance in our contemporary operating environment. While most military training focuses on servicemembers being able to engage with the enemy, it is equally important to educate servicemembers on cultures and foreign language so that when we partner with foreign militaries and engage in capacity building, we can speak their language and understand their culture.

The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Odierno, and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral Stavridis, have argued that the future of our defense strategy requires strong relationships with capable partners. Unfortunately, there is a language and cultural capability gap in the Department of Defense, an organization that operates globally to accomplish its mission yet has less than 10% whom speak a second language. Effective partner capacity building requires the kind of relationships that cannot be built through using an interpreter alone.

Our military's ability to understand cultures and languages in Iraq and Afghanistan has taken a long and costly road. That road's most valuable lesson is that our military personnel need the capacity to understand foreign cultures and languages before they are deployed. The ability of our junior and senior military leaders to build partnerships and partner capacity requires training in culture and languages not only in times of conflict but also in times of peace.

Two world class military installations in my district provide this critically needed education to all the Services. The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and the Naval Postgraduate School educate military personnel in the languages and cultures of our partners. Investment in language and culture enhances readiness for military intelligence, Special Forces, and general-purpose forces at a low cost. This capability enables servicemembers to connect with our

partnering countries at the unit level where the mission is executed.

America's strategic challenges, including a pivot to the Pacific region that has more than 70 countries and more than 100 regional and national languages, will generate additional requirements for language and put additional strain on the current capacity for skilled foreign language analysts, Foreign Area Officers, military intelligence personnel, and attachés. We must meet the demand and respond proactively.

Madam Chair, again, I am appreciative of the committee's support of foreign language capability and cultural understanding in the military and look forward to working with them in the future to ensure our military is resourced to meet the strategic demands of the future.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1960) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Chair, I am here to ask that you support my amendment requesting the Secretary of the Army to review and provide a report on the Medal of Honor nomination of Captain William L. Albracht of Moline, Illinois.

Many, including the Vietnam Veterans of America, strongly believe that after reviewing all of the documentation that the Silver Star is not commensurate with Captain Albracht's actions during the five days of the siege of Firebase Kate in South Vietnam.

It is the belief that the Army performed a cursory review of the nomination, given the length of time between Captain Albracht's heroic actions and his initial Medal of Honor nomination.

Forty-three years ago, Captain Albracht, then a 21-year-old Green Beret, was in charge of a U.S. military evacuation at Firebase Kate.

Captain Albracht's strong leadership, calm under extreme duress, and care for countless other soldiers was exemplary. He was responsible for saving 150 lives.

Outnumbered 40-to-1 and vulnerable, conditions grew more dire. Albracht took shrapnel to the arm. The wound easily could have landed him aboard one of the last medevac helicopters that dared approach Firebase Kate.

But he chose to stay.

He led these 150 men off the base, despite being wounded, surrounded and constantly targeted by the enemy. After long nights, Captain Albracht's escape plan worked.

After arriving safely at a nearby outpost, word came that there would be a ceremony to honor their heroic actions. A helicopter was

sent to pick up Captain Albracht, despite poor flying conditions that had grounded many other aircraft.

Upon arrival of the helicopter, Captain Albracht noted that there were several wounded soldiers who could not be airlifted due to weather conditions. He told the aircrew of his helicopter to get the men to a hospital. Giving up his seat caused him to miss the ceremony. His actions went unrecognized for four decades.

Others under Captain Albracht's command and guidance were awarded Silver Stars for their actions that day. However, Captain Albracht was not recognized for leading his soldiers to safety through the dense Vietnamese jungle while repeatedly facing extreme enemy fire.

Many believe that every man at Firebase Kate would have died if not for Captain Albracht. There was no one else capable of calling in an airstrike and no one there capable of inspiring these men to follow him into that jungle.

This is why I am requesting that the Army review and provide a report on why Captain Albracht's heroic actions and Medal of Honor nomination was downgraded two levels.

RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE AGA KHAN FOUNDATION'S CHICAGO PARTNERSHIP GOLF OUTING

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 14, 2013

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) an outstanding charitable endeavor that helps battle poverty across the globe, and I am proud that AKF will hold its 2013 Chicago Partnership Golf Outing in Illinois's Tenth District.

In total, nearly 1.4 billion people live in extreme poverty. As our world continues to evolve, develop and grow more interconnected, this reality becomes ever more evident, increasingly more unacceptable. The AKF, through remarkable global programs and incredible individual generosity, fights to empower people in every corner of the planet.

As the global upheaval of the last few years continues, it is imperative that we remain engaged with the world and actively lead in trying to improve it. Times of change offer the chance to alter the course of history, and the AKF is not pulling back from this moment, but rather is embracing it.

Every dollar raised for the Chicago Partnership Golf Outing goes directly to AKF charitable projects, with no money toward administrative costs. This steadfast commitment to its founding ideals has led the AKF to the forefront of the fight against poverty.

Recently, the AKF launched an initiative to empower the war-torn people of Mali. Its dedication to working in some of the most dangerous, devastated regions of the world is both noble and inspiring. For those who need its services most, the AKF has been willing and able to step up and make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor this special organization, and I wish them great success now and in the future.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS A. ROSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1960) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chair, I rise today to thank Chairman McKEON and Ranking Member SMITH for their hard work on this important legislation, and to speak in support of my amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act.

My amendment is very simple and straightforward—it would prohibit the Department of Defense from using taxpayer funds to provide additional or upgraded recreational facilities for detainees at U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

I cannot help but remember that the federal government wasted \$750,000 last year to build a recreational soccer field in Guantanamo Bay for detainees. I thought it was a ridiculous idea then, and I think it is a ridiculous idea now.

At a time when we have an out-of-control backlog of Veterans claims pending a decision—taxpayer funding was wasted building a soccer field for terrorists?

At a time when the President's Administration is proposing to drastically raise TRICARE fees on service members and their families—\$750,000 were spent to improve the recreational facilities for terrorist detainees?

At a time when we can't give seniors a fair cost-of-living increase in benefits?

Or at a time when families across the country are making tough cutbacks in their own budgets, we're building soccer fields in Cuba?

Guantanamo Bay is a detention facility for terrorists captured on the battlefield or apprehended actively planning to do harm to Americans.

As such, Guantanamo Bay should not be a place of comfort; rather, it should house the world's most dangerous terrorists in a humane way, providing only the bare essentials.

Our Founding Fathers made it clear that the federal government has no higher duty than to "provide for the common defense."

Rather than balancing the budget on the backs of our military, Department of Defense employees, seniors, and families, Congress should prevent wasteful projects like this—period.

Once again, I want to thank the Chair and Ranking Member for their work on this legislation, and encourage my colleagues to join me in passing this fiscally responsible amendment to ensure taxpayer's funds are not used to construct or upgrade recreational facilities for terrorist detainees.