

once again deny voting rights for members from the territories and the District of Columbia, and continue to make this body less transparent and less responsive to the more than four million Americans who live in our districts.

Under the resolution, extending voting rights to the Delegates and the Resident Commissioner during Committee of the Whole proceedings would be wholly symbolic—our votes cannot change the outcome of legislation or amendments considered on the floor of this House. However these votes allow us to ensure that the needs of our constituents are addressed in legislation considered by this body.

Further, many of our nation's men and women in uniform are residents of the territories and the District of Columbia. These dedicated servicemembers sacrifice much for our country, and many have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. In fact, the per capita death rate for servicemembers from the territories is higher than most states. Unfortunately the majority has decided that our constituents will be less represented in this House despite the sacrifices that servicemembers from our districts make to defend the basic rights and freedoms enjoyed by all Americans. Additionally beyond high levels of military service, residents from the territories and the District of Columbia contribute to and serve our nation in a wide range of areas. The inability to vote in the Committee of the Whole is unfortunate, but I appreciate that this resolution seeks to remedy this matter.

Mr. Speaker, giving the Delegates and Resident Commissioner the ability to vote during Committee of the Whole proceedings will allow our voices to be heard during legislation considered by the full House. It will give us parity with other members and strengthen the long-cherished values of this body. I urge my colleagues to adopt this resolution.

IN MEMORY OF KELLY WALTERS

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to remember an exceptional young lady taken from us far too soon.

20-year-old Kelly Walters was killed in a tragic hit and run accident on January 16, 2015 as she crossed the street in her hometown of Arlington, Texas. While her death made headlines back home—today I want to focus on the way Kelly lived.

I met Kelly several years ago at one of my town hall meetings. When I asked the crowd if they had any questions, hers was the first hand that shot up. She couldn't vote yet, but her love of our community and interest in government was already on full display.

A few months later, I was proud to sponsor her for the prestigious House Page program. While in Washington, her love of the civic process and politics only grew.

She came by my office regularly to chat with me and my staff. She was too young at the time, but was already expressing interest in serving as an intern in my office.

I understand she wasn't shy about sharing her future political aspirations telling people

she was going to run for my seat as soon as I retired. I do appreciate her waiting for my career in Congress to end before hers began. I have since learned she was aiming even higher. She wrote a letter to President Clinton in December of 2000, at the ripe old age of six, saying she wanted his job. Kelly said, "I think I would be a good President because I care about people and how they treat others . . . Please let me know when I need to come to Washington to begin my new assignment. I will need to let people know I will be out of school and have my work mailed to me."

Kelly possessed a rare understanding of the importance of American politics and the impact that it has on everyday life. She had a keen interest and genuine curiosity about the legislative process.

After her semester in the Nation's Capitol, she returned home where she continued to cultivate her deep dedication to civic duty. She volunteered in our community, worked on campaigns, interned for a state representative and excelled in the classroom.

Kelly was a junior at the University of Texas at Arlington and was days from leaving to study abroad in Morocco. She wanted to promote women's rights in the Arabic world.

So what drove this exceptional young woman? Kelly says it best in her own words. This is an excerpt from an essay she wrote a few years ago: "America is based on many beliefs, but they all boil down to one simple word: Freedom. Life in America is free, it is one most people take for granted, but it was not cheap. Freedom is bought on the back of soldiers who were willing to risk their lives to fight for their country and America's right to be free. Thus Freedom is built on service, on a willingness to give back for what has been given. I don't pretend to know or understand why others volunteer, but for me it is a need to give back for all the opportunities that are standing open for me simply because I am an American."

Profound words that everyone in this body should take to heart. It is rare to see someone so young so engaged. Kelly will be missed, but her love of our community and of our nation will not be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING KATHY NICKEL AS THE NOVATO CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Kathy Nickel on the occasion of her recognition as the Novato Citizen of the Year.

Ms. Nickel has been a longtime resident of Novato and is well known for her community involvement. She was an active public school supporter, serving as PTA President, chairman of Safe Grad Night at San Marin High School and member of curriculum planning teams, and she continued to support Novato public schools in an advisory capacity after her children had graduated. Ms. Nickel also served as a Troop Leader for Marin Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts and was a team parent for Novato Youth Soccer during this time.

Ms. Nickel's civic involvement has been a constant and positive force for the community,

including her roles as Chair of the Novato Fourth of July Committee, member of the City of Novato's Birthday Steering Committee, and as a volunteer coordinator for the Art and Wine Festival for the Novato Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Nickel has been an exemplary citizen of Novato, striving to improve the city for all its residents. Her inspiring commitment and dedication will have a lasting impact on her community for many years to come.

Please join me in expressing deep appreciation to Kathy Nickel for her long and impressive record of public service.

WORLD WAR I HISTORY LESSONS FOR TODAY'S RETURNING IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I, with my colleagues SANFORD BISHOP and CHARLES RANGEL, rise to submit a report, written by Ron Armstead, of the 26th Annual Veterans Braintrust at the 44th Annual Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference.

2014 is the beginning of the worldwide celebration of the centennial of World War I, known as the "war to end all wars." Although, the U.S. didn't join the war until 1917, we would like to point out one American Eugene Jacques Bullard, born in Columbus, GA, who enlisted on October 19, 1914 to fight for France. He later, became the first African American, combat aviator in history with the motto: "All Blood Runs Red" Also note, 33 years after his death, and 77 years after being denied entry into the U.S. Army Air Corps—Bullard was posthumously commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force.

Nearly 5 million Americans served during the war, and 116,516 Americans died in defense of democracy overseas. World War I also marked the first time in the nation's history that American soldiers went abroad to defend foreign soil against aggression. During the war to end all wars, the U.S. enlisted 367,710 African American men as soldiers—most from the south—into the Armed Forces. About 200,000 were sent to France and about 50,000 of those saw combat. The vast majority served in the Service of Supply (SOS) units in Europe with the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) on the Western Front, while also encountering French civilians and colonial African troops alike.

U.S. World War I veterans have moved from memory to history. We are reminded that the last American soldier to die in World War I was Private Wayne Miner of Kansas City, and he was but one of the many African Americans, who participated in Black Regiments during the war. This included the celebrated 369th, formerly New York 15th National Guard "Harlem Hellfighters," made up of volunteers, who served more days under continuous fire (181 days) than any other regiment in the AEF during the entire war, and the first American unit to reach the Rhine River, while suffering 40% killed and wounded—with 171 African Americans from the 369th alone being awarded the Croix de Guerre, or French Legion of

Merit for heroism in battle, as well as the entire unit.

Regarding the Black American in the World War for Democracy, are the historic words of Emmett Scott, Special Assistant to the Secretary of War Newton D. Baker. "The Negro, in the Great War for Freedom and Democracy, had proved to be a notable and inspiring figure. The record and achievements of this racial group as brave soldiers and loyal citizens, furnish one of the brightest chapters in American history." American Negroes in the World War, 1919.

This stands in sharp contrast to what Maj. Gen. Robert L. Bullard, Commander of the American 2nd Army during World War I, and an Alabama racist who wrote in 1923 "Poor Negroes! They are hopelessly inferior . . ." "If you need combat soldiers, and especially if you need them in a hurry, don't put your time upon Negroes."

Thus, the framework for the 26th Annual Veterans Braintrust Forum was African Americans, history, advocacy and legacy. The invocation and benediction was presented by Rev. Dr. Grainer Browning, Jr., setting the tone and sending a message of hope and faith for the discussions to come. Harlem's own Rep. CHARLES RANGEL (D-NY), senior Member of the House Ways and Means Committee led the remarks by describing veterans as a special fraternity of men and women. While also recognizing WWI icon Capt. Hamilton Fish, and historic places such as Hellfighter Square and the Harlem Armory, home of the 369th Veterans Association and Museum. As he said, "when the flag goes up, we fight." But, for many economically it is their only choice, or chance. He also cautioned that there is a lack of confidence in our government (or trust deficit), despite the arguable threat to national security. And amid White House pronouncements there will be no American boots on the ground, versus the fact that between 1600 to 2000 troops are already on the ground. Equally important, he said, the challenge sent to Congress is whether "we are at war" and determining "what is the actual threat to America." Additionally, shouldn't we set aside enough money for those returning from harm's way, and shouldn't everybody be "on call," including those children of those most politically and economically powerful.

Rep. BISHOP, in joining with his colleagues BROWN, RANGEL and EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON in thanking Ron Armstead for his continued support, said to the veterans in the audience—"we owe you an immeasurable debt, for without your sacrifices, our freedom and liberties would not be as secure." Further, "this year marks the 100th anniversary of WWI, and we must remember the many sacrifices made during WWI and African Americans that served during this dark period."

On May 18, 1917, the Selective Service Act was passed by Congress requiring all male citizens between the ages of 21 and 31 to register for the draft. However, even before the act was passed, African American males from all over the country eagerly joined the war effort. They viewed the conflict as an opportunity to prove their loyalty, patriotism and worthiness for equal treatment in the United States. This is still true today, WWI veterans and the veterans of today give selflessly of themselves for the love of their country, yet some still have to fight to receive the recognition for their actions and earned benefits.

"It is said 'those who forget the lessons of the past are bound to repeat them.' War has always been full of unplanned consequences for our service members; we must be vigilant in responding to the needs of our veterans, and our obligations in sharing the same passion for defending our nation. We must learn from the past, work on progress for the future, and continue to work on areas that need improvement. I hope that when you leave today's discussion, the information you have heard will build a lasting bond, and help us work together, improving service members and their families quality of life, as well as expanding the opportunities to our service member's still on active duty, and to our veterans."

Finally, BISHOP emphasized this point as we focus on WWI and the impact it had on those African Americans returning from war, "A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."

Rep. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON expressed her disappointment at seeing the President's issuing of 24 medals of honor, that did not include a certain individual who truly deserves to be honored—specifically, Petty Officer Doris 'Dorie' Miller. Petty Officer Miller was awarded the Navy Cross by President Roosevelt before his death in 1943, although he was never awarded the Medal of Honor, the Navy has concluded that the Navy Cross appropriately recognizes his actions, however, she and many others have always believed this to be distinctly untrue.

Rep. CORRINE BROWN, who has served on the House Committee on Veterans Affairs for over twenty-two years, announced that she was seeking the Ranking Member position for the House Veterans Affairs Committee in the 114th Congress. She noticed that when the Democrats were in charge, they passed the largest veterans health care budget in the history of this country; passed the largest increase of the GI Bill since World War II; and tried to insure veterans against a Republican government shutdown by providing advanced appropriations for health care programs. "These advanced appropriations provide veterans with much needed security in the future."

BROWN looks forward to bringing veterans issues back to the forefront of policy in the House of Representatives along with working together with those veterans and veterans advocates represented here today to present a strong voice for our deserving veterans. She finished by quoting President George Washington, who said, "The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country."

The keynote speaker was the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Sloan Gibson. Deputy Secretary Gibson was confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs on February 11, 2014—and on May 30, 2014, was appointed Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

The Deputy Secretary stated, one hundred years ago the first shots were fired that would lead our nation into World War I. The first step in fulfilling President Lincoln's charge to care for those "who shall have borne the battle . . ." And on April 6, 1917, the nation called, and Henry Johnson, Needham Roberts and thousands of others answered the call. Their

unit was the 369th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Harlem Hellfighters," who served with the French 16th Division in the Argonne Forest on the Western Front. Pvt. Johnson suffered 21 combat injuries, and Pvt. Roberts a grenade wound in hand-to-hand combat. For their valor they were the first Americans to earn the Croix de Guerre, France's highest military honor. Yet, few details are recorded about Needham Roberts, who died in an asylum in 1949. But, much more is known about Sgt. Henry Johnson's transition from military service, discharge records fail to account for his severe wounds—no Purple Heart, no Pension. Debilitating injuries cost him his job, his family, and he died destitute in 1939, only 32 years old. The VA was not there for him.

Even 75 years later we find that still shocks the conscience, prompting the question the Veterans Braintrust asks: a century after sending our national treasure "Over There," are we doing any better supporting their transitions over here?

First, in any effort we have to make sure every veteran, regardless of social and economic circumstances, has the opportunity for a happy and fulfilling life. Second, to really do better, the VA has to look at everything we do through the eyes of those we serve—our veterans. And that is where Secretary Bob McDonald is leading us—to a veteran-centric organization that measures performance by veterans' outcomes and impacts, as opposed to inputs, activity, outputs, or good intentions. The metrics that matter are Veteran outcomes and impacts. We won't attempt to recite all the examples, or accomplishments he cited, of the VA doing better such as Veterans Treatment Courts, Vet Centers. . . .

But here are a number of unfortunate facts: homelessness for veterans of color is disproportionately high. While 20% of veterans are minorities nearly half of homeless veterans in temporary shelters are minorities. Another fact is, a disproportionate number of criminal justice involved veterans are minorities. These and similar health disparities led to establishing VA's Office of Health Equity (OHE) in 2012 under the leadership of Dr. Uehenna Uchendu. With OHE's singular mission being to help ensure all veterans receive effective and equitable health care—regardless of race, gender, age, geography, and culture or sexual orientation. In closing, Gibson said, "So are we doing better in supporting warfighters' transitions? The short answer is, yes, we're doing better. But we still have lots to do. All of us, together."

The other very special guest speaker was Three Star Gen. Ronald Bailey, USMC, originally from St. Augustine, Florida. In his remarks, he spoke about the 100th Anniversary of World War I being a rare opportunity to reflect on where we have come from, share stories such as Leo C. Chase, the first soldier to die from St. Augustine as a consequence of Vietnam fighting in the battle of the Ia Drang Valley (which story is vividly told in the 1992 book, "We Were Soldiers Once and Young: Ia Drang—The Battle that Changed the War in Vietnam"). We were also able to extrapolate important lessons, and offer long overdue recognition as part of the healing process. Lastly, he called the Hon. CORRINE BROWN, the 'Lion of the Marine Corps,' for her unwavering efforts in honoring the Montford Point Marines with the Congressional Gold Medal.

PANELISTS

Mike Betz spoke highly about the recent report, which was part of the Million Records Project, an initiative of Student Veterans of America (SVA), which measured for the first-time ever veterans' performance in higher education; D. Wayne Robinson, a retired Command Sergeant Major spoke about Student Veterans of America (SVA) Chapters across the country, student veterans return on investment (ROI) to America and his way of giving back as President/CEO; Col. David Sutherland spoke about the importance of connecting with families and community. He also briefly told the story of Staff Sgt. Donnie Dixon, a career soldier who was killed on his second tour of duty in Baloor, Iraq, and the Easter Seals Center that is named after him to address the urgent needs of military service members, veterans and their families, or the homecoming; Sgt. DeMarqus Townsend spoke about his personal struggles with coming home from combat and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Prof. Pellom McDaniels, author of the forthcoming "Memoir of Royal Christian, a Black World War I Soldier" (2015), spoke passionately about the importance of WWI, for African Americans social, political and economic advancement; Prof. Adriane Lentz-Smith, author of "Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I" (2009), spoke of African American soldiers returning home to join activist working to gain full citizenship rights as recompense for military service; Prof. Joel Beeson spoke about the striking and uncanny parallels between our present moment in history and the time before, during and after WWI. Journalist Yvonne Latty, spoke about the pride that emerged from writing "We Were There: Voices of African American Veterans, From World War II to the War in Iraq" (2004), and later her ambivalence resulting from writing "In Conflict: Iraq War Veterans Speak Out on Duty, Loss, and the Fight to Stay Alive" (2006), and last, but not least Dr. Linda Lagemann spoke out about the flood of mind-altering psychiatric drugs being administered by military physicians for service personnel, and veterans.

Afterward during the comments period Tara Johnson, the granddaughter of Sgt. Henry Johnson, WWI Hero, daughter of famed Tuskegee Airman Herman Johnson of WWII, and mother of Sgt. DeMarqus Townsend, USMC, a Iraq combat veteran spoke with heartfelt emotion that her grandfather died alone and destitute never receiving help for his mental and health-related issues from WWI. Saying, while government has made great strides in the care of returning troops, much more work is still needed, particularly at the family, friends and community level—because we can't afford to throw them (returnees) away.

In recognition of the continuing importance of jobs for returning Iraq and Afghanistan soldiers and their families, the Veterans Braintrust and Disney once again teamed up for a special breakout session highlighting Disney's Veterans Institute's unique "10 STEPS" for creating a Veterans Hiring Program; in addition to discussing strategies, tactics and interviewing techniques for bringing on-board veterans.

Now, despite the fact that there are no longer any U.S. veterans left from World War I, there were a number of World War I de-

scendants and relatives, institutions, organizations, historic places and groups. To name a few, such as the Kenneth Hawkins American Legion Post #61 of Atlantic City, New Jersey that contributed to linking the past with the present. At the family level, there were descendants Rev. Dr. Grainger Brown, Jr., the Grandson of Cpl. Clifton Merimon, 372nd, who earned the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), Croix de Guerre and Medaille Militaire; Tara Johnson, Granddaughter and Sgt. DeMarqus Townsend, USMC, disabled Iraq soldier and Great-Grandson of Sgt. Henry Johnson of the 369th; Charles Hamilton Houston, Jr., aging son of Lt. Charles Hamilton Houston, Sr., WWI Officer, Harvard Law School Graduate Class of 1923, and Civil Rights Hero; Roger Morris, Grandson of Lt. James Morris, Sr., a native of Georgia and Graduate of the U.S. Army's first Class of Black Officers in 1917, Jerry Bowman, Grandson of Ira Bowman, who served with the 369th, and Clarence 'Tiger' Davis, who's Aunt, Louvenia Bradley-Harper, traveled to Paris in 1918 to retrieve her son Melvin Harper's body. She came home without his remains, saying, "that he was in a much better place." He is buried in Manheim, Germany.

Equally important, all this served as the broader context for our pre-centennial WWI Forum discussion, which was instructive and insightful. First, many parallels were drawn between WWI and Iraq and Afghanistan returnees, particularly injuries (e.g. PTSD, TBI, suicides and domestic violence), and war's impact on families, both military and civilians.

Second, in answering a couple of historical and philosophical questions such as did WWI end all wars and Save the World for Democracy, and (2) do we learn from history, or repeat it—given that the WWI Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, or Middle East boundaries continue to fuel conflict, and geo-political fighting in the region today (along sectarian, tribal and ethnic lines on the ground)—we would answer a resounding 'no!' Which leads many of us to believe, or say, "the more things change, the more they stay the same."

Third, a long overdue bill (S. 2793) to authorize the award of the Medal of Honor to Sgt. Henry Johnson was introduced and passed the Senate on September 18, 2014, with a related bill (HR5459) being referred to the House Armed Service Committee. However, the process is Congress must pass a separate authorization due to the time period for awarding has passed. But, once the legislation is passed it goes to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for verification, and afterward to the President's desk for signing.

Fourth, Dr. Adriane Lentz-Smith says, "there's actually a deeper and longer story, or view of the origins of the Civil Rights Movement, than that of the 50's Brown v. Board of Education decision of 1954 & 60's successful passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act." New scholarship lends a sense of a longer and harder civil rights struggle, one that dates back to the World War One era (U.S. Supreme Court's Plessy v. Ferguson decision of 1896) and the aftermath of the Civil War. Leading Dr. Pellom McDaniel's to call for, or recommend the creation of a Consortium for the Study of African Americans in World War One with the support of the Veterans Braintrust of the Congressional Black Caucus to leverage and/or attract filmmakers, scholars, supporters, etc.

Finally, the 26th annual gala reception and awards ceremony hosted by Hon. CORRINE BROWN was held in the Veterans' Committee Hearing Room of the Cannon House Office Building. This year's awards were presented by Ron Armstead before a full house to Linwood Alford, Gregory Cooke, Sgt. Patricia Harris, Col. Conway Jones, USAF, Ret., Will 'It Takes a Village' Smith, Robert 'Bobby' White, Ellis Ray Williams, Come Home Baltimore, Eastern Seals Dixon Military and Veterans Community Service Center, Fulton County Veterans Court and Mentorship Program, Open Door Resource Center, Inc., Stone of Hope Program, Student Veterans of America, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, Inc., Westside All Wars Memorial Building, the "Parting Way" Museum of African American and Cape Verdean American Ethnohistory, Inc., the film 'Choc'Late Soldiers from the USA,' and World War I soldiers Ira Bowman, Lt. Charles Hamilton Houston, Sr., and Sgt. Henry Johnson posthumously. The Rep. BROWN closed the awards segment with a rousing rendition of 'God Bless America.'

Special thanks goes to our historians, families, friends, supporters and staff—Profs. Adrian Lentz-Smith, Joel Beeson, Pellom McDaniels, Journalist Yvonne Latty and Dr. Linda Lagemann; Rev. Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr., Tara Johnson, Sgt. DeMarqus Townsend, USMC, Jerry Bowman, Robert Morris and Clarence 'Tiger' Davis; Dr. Frank Smith, Jr., Prof. Maria Hoehn and Dr. Krewasky Salter; Ralph Cooper, Morocco Coleman, Carmen Wilson II, Robert Blackwell, Elaine Sacks, Mildred Kidd Smith, Tom Harris, Dr. Dorothy Simpson-Taylor, Howard Jefferson, and Dr. Davine Reed; Dr. Richard Lipsky, Education Corporation of America, Smithsonian Channel, National Archives and Records Administration; Austin Brock, Col. Kevin Preston, USA, Ret., and the Walt Disney Veterans Initiative; and Sydney Renwick, Lee Footer, Stephanie Anim-Yankah, Jonathan Halpern, Vernita Stevens, Hannah Kim, Reba Raffaelli, Ronnie Simmons and Shantrel Brown.

HONORING PROFESSOR DAVID HILLYER VOORHEES

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Professor David Hillyer Voorhees and his election as an Education Section Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Mr. Voorhees is an associate professor of earth science and geology at Waubesa Community College, which has campuses in Sugar Grove and Aurora, Illinois. He is being honored for his contributions as an educator and for his role in creating Geo2YC, a national organization for geoscience faculty at two-year colleges. Geo2YC, a division of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers, brings professors from two-year institutions together for networking, support, and research into geoscience education.

I would like to thank Mr. Voorhees for his commitment to science and quality education in our community.