

and share their grief, because for the past 37 years they have been suffering under the religious and terrorist dictatorship, which is the Godfather of ISIS.

Today, humanity's conscience is in shock and disbelief, wondering how such crimes can be committed in the name of God and under the banner of religion.

Fundamentalism has nothing to do with Islam, whether it is under the pretext of Shiite extremism and religious tyranny or *velayat-e faqih* (absolute clerical rule) or under the pretext of Sunni extremism and Daesh (ISIS).

Such inhumane crimes have no connection to Islam, and are evils that represent enmity to peace and humanity everywhere.

Crimes committed by the religious fascism ruling Iran, including 120,000 political executions, hostage-taking and export of terrorism, have nothing to do with Islam or the Iranian people.

For this reason, I urge all Muslims to strongly condemn the crimes committed in Paris and to not allow the conduct of these ruthless terrorists to occur in the name of Islam and Muslims.

I also call on them to stand firm against such extremism, which violates the true teachings of Islam.

The Assad regime in Syria and its prime sponsor the mullahs ruling Iran are the chief sociopolitical enablers of ISIS, with their slaughter of 300,000 innocent people and displacing of more than half of the Syrian population.

As long as this dictatorship rules in Damascus with the backing of the religious fascism ruling Iran, ISIS will continue to thrive and extend its scourge of death from the Middle East to Europe.

At the same time, Iran's ruling mullahs, who are the primary beneficiaries of these crimes, are brazenly blaming the French government for the attacks.

According to what they published in a news agency affiliated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), their demand is for France to abandon its firm policy against the Assad dictatorship in light of the November 13th massacre and to instead "coordinate its efforts with the Islamic countries," namely the mullahs in Tehran.

In such circumstances, it has become increasingly vital for France to insist on the removal of Bashar Assad from power and to adopt a more decisive policy in resolving the Syrian crisis.

Experience has shown that firmness is the most effective and the only principled and correct approach to confronting terrorists.

Once again, I extend my most sincere sympathies to the people of France and pray for a speedy recover for the injured.

THE PRESIDENT'S VOW: ENDING VETERANS HOMELESSNESS BY 2015

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Reps. CHARLES RANGEL (D-NY), SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (D-GA) and I rise within the 100 days remaining to reaffirm our support for the President's Vow to End Veterans Homelessness by December 2015. We also reaffirm the First Lady and Dr. Biden's White House Joining Forces Initiative aimed at supporting military families, and last year's Mayor's Challenge to End Homelessness among veterans.

We also want to recognize the legendary Hon. CHARLES RANGEL (D-NY), who was the

first to call attention to our nation's greatest failing 'the plight of our homeless veterans' in 1992, on the heels of the seminal report 'Heroes Today, Homeless Tomorrow.' That report revealed that 250,000 men, or one of every three single homeless men sleeping on the streets or in shelters, on any given night, were veterans and 40% were Black. Now, 23 years later the Hons. CHARLES RANGEL, SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. and I convened the forum, "President's Vow" to review the past 20 year's accomplishments and shortfalls against the backdrop of Rep. RANGEL's 'Yesterday's Military Heroes Ought Not be Today's Homeless,' where high unemployment, homelessness, and health concerns prevailed.

The forum successfully blended the President's Vow and First Lady's Mayor's Challenge, along with Congressional efforts, while placing Black and women veterans homelessness within the framework of the national dialogue, or discussion. Furthermore, the forum succeeded in impressing upon lawmakers and the audience a fundamental truth that 'race and gender matter' in our comprehension of 21st century at-risk and homeless veterans. It argued the persuasive case of urban veterans' homelessness, joblessness and incarceration, the link between homelessness, poverty and hunger among veterans across America, disparities in health outcomes for male and female veterans, the triple disadvantages for African American female veterans, and the need for more case management services, transitional housing and permanent affordable housing development. It also exposed the need for better case worker-to-veteran ratios.

We began the forum with a musical prelude performed by David Bratton, known as the DC Lou Rawls, and the traditional military presenting of colors. In addition, Dr. James Averhart, Past President of the Montford Point Marine Association led us in the Pledge of Allegiance, and Chaplain Michael McCoy, Associate Director of VA Chaplains offered the invocation and benediction.

Congressman CHARLES RANGEL (D-NY) then introduced Col. Nicole Malachowski, USAF, Iraq Combat Pilot and Executive Director of the White House Joining Forces Initiative, who brought greetings from First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden as a morale booster. Accompanying greetings came from Hon. SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (D-GA) and Hon. CORRINE BROWN's (D-FL), who also introduced the new VA UnderSecretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin, MD for keynote remarks. Afterward, Congressman SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (D-GA) introduced our impressive panelist and Executive Director Ron Armstead as moderator for the panel discussion to come. The panel discussion consisted of the following members:

Col. Eugene Scott, USA, Ret., President of Chicago Defender Charities, started by focusing on the Chicago Defenders more than 100-year history in defense of the black community. However, he was more outspoken about veterans' homelessness and in highlighting veterans' hunger in Chicago. Georgia State Legislator Calvin Symre, who is also Past President, National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) stated that NBCSL is formulating and leading discussions around homeless veterans policies with the White House and other agencies. The intention is to mobilize everyone at the state, city and local levels for support, because the struggle

doesn't end, and there is always the need for more people to be involved. Nan Roman, President/CEO, National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), presented statistics on veterans homelessness and discussed the overrepresentation of African Americans, who represent only 10% of the general veterans' population, adding that, although numbers appear to be declining, there still is a discrepancy. Gregory Scott, President/CEO, New Directions for Veterans (ND), talked about his father (a troubled Korean war veteran) who died all too soon and about his family knowing nothing about PTSD, thus establishing the importance of the connection between veterans and their families, in identifying with not only the homeless, but with all struggling veterans.

Baylee Crone, President/CEO, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) described the coalition, its services and its efforts to end chronic homelessness as well as the importance of listening to its founders, such as Ralph Cooper, M.Ed., a co-founder of NCHV, and others. Steve Peck, President/CEO of U.S. VETS, suggested the need for a long-range plan beyond December 2015. Carlyre Holder, President, National Association for Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCCJ), spoke about the criminal justice system and the need for reform—noting that President Barack Obama is the first president ever to visit a federal prison—in addition to expressing the NABCCJ's support of social justice and veterans' courts. Ed Jennings, Southeast Regional Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), indicated that the vast majority of the First Lady's Mayor's Challenge and state and other official signers come from the southeast region of HUD. The latest numbers being 555, out of 854 nationally from Region 4.

The question-and-answer period was a lively exchange between attendees and panel members reflecting motivation, stimulated thinking and enthusiasm; Anthony Love, VA Senior Advisor and Director of Community Engagement remained throughout in order to answer questions and address concerns regarding homelessness.

The Veterans Braintrust Homeless Forum was significant for its timing—we were 100 days away from the December 2015 deadline for ending veterans homelessness. And we are embracing the First Lady's and Dr. Biden's agenda, along with fulfilling our central mission of advocating nationally and articulating clearly the message that "Blacks are continually overrepresented among the homeless veterans population, despite being only 10% of the general veterans population." The key question—why are Black veterans disproportionately represented among the homeless—remains essentially unanswered, as does the issue of why "women veterans are now the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, particularly single women with children." Therefore, more needs to be done before the national media declares victory, and the 'political and public will' goes away.

Although, we are watching the national homeless statistics in order to anticipate and formulate the next steps, we envisioned the forum as part of an "all hands on deck" effort and opportunity for enhancing homeless veterans policy, programs, services with outside-the-box problem solving. Yet, we realized that representatives from the DC area alone were absent for some unknown reason. Further, despite not requesting the Friday morning forum

be recorded, we did manage to audio record the Saturday homeless advocates and providers roundtable discussion as per Dr. William Lawson's advising the need to write, publish and develop articles, policy papers, and talking points, as a way of contributing to the literature. Furthermore, charter member Tom Harris suggested that the recording be sent to members across the country, so it can be shared locally for people to hear and discuss.

Most importantly, the forum feedback was highly favorable, with comments like 'the forum was on point,' 'I learned so much,' 'great job,' 'incredible,' 'awesome,' 'phenomenal,' 'I thought it was great for Congressional representatives to focus on homeless veterans,' 'impressed with panel and listened intensely,' 'made good contacts,' 'well organized,' and 'it was a one stop shop of information giving a broad perspective (from coast to coast), or a snap shot of black veterans status, or circumstantial situation, particularly for those of us on limited budgets and fixed incomes.' The general consensus was that we are making progress, but we still have work to do. Consequently, two tangible forum outcomes under serious consideration are crafting a position/policy paper and creating a new Veterans Braintrust Homeless Committee consisting of advocates and providers from the community or grassroots level. Also under consideration is planning a follow-up session with the strong support of the National Alliance to End Homelessness and others to include either a Capitol Hill Briefing and/or high level meetings with Congresswoman BROWN (D-FL) and other leaders in Congress.

The Annual Gala Reception and Awards Ceremony was, as usual, 'a standing room only' affair in the Cannon House Office's Room 334 (Veterans Hearing Room). With a musical showcase performed by DC's Lou Rawls, followed by Congresswoman BROWN's welcome and introduction of Veterans Affairs personnel, committee staffers and Don Phillips, Minority Staff Director, House Committee on Veterans Affairs (HCVA), in addition to our very special guest Martin Luther King III, and Pastor Leon Bryant, Sr., who blessed the food. In his role as Master of Ceremonies Executive Director Ron Armstead presented a series of gifts to Congresswoman BROWN: first, a mug inscribed 'The Best Man for the Job is a Woman'; second, a civil war book titled "Firebrand of Liberty—The Story of Two Black Regiments that Changed the Course of the Civil War" by Stephen V. Ash, and third, a special Josiah Walls citation on behalf of Dr. Frank Smith, Jr., Founder of the African American Civil War Memorial Museum, located in Washington, DC.

Deserving 2015 Awardees were: Andrae Bailey, Abraham House-El, Gregory Crawford, Dr. Sharon Elliott-Bynum, Duery Felton, Jr., Irvin Goodwin, Clifton Lewis, Bruce Marks, Ivan Mason, Wendy McClinton, Col. Eugene Scott, USA, Ret., Gregory Scott, M. William Sermons, Darryl Vincent, Cordell Walker, Martha Watts, Alshi Williams, Larry Williams, A Step Forward, Inc., Catholic Charities St. Leo Campus for Veterans, Central Florida Commission on Homelessness, Final Salute, Inc., Greater Chicago Food Depository, Healing with CAARE, Inc., Joseph's Place, National Alliance to End Homelessness, National Association of American Veterans, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, Samuel L.

Felton Community Center, The Jericho Project, United States Veteran Initiative (U.S. VETs), United Way of King County, United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley, Veterans on the Rise, Michigan Veterans Foundation, Stand Down House, Film: 'Sweet Georgia Brown' and Historical Group: National World War II Museum Traveling Exhibit: 'Fight for the Right to Fight: The African American Experience in World War II.'

The official awards ceremony concluded with the playing of Ray Charles' rendition of "America the Beautiful," coupled with times are "Changin'" by Brass Construction to underscore the important historical changes taking place: from the Civil War to Josiah Walls, Florida's Black Congressman of Reconstruction, to the 50th Anniversary of the successful passage of the Voting Rights Act, to Rep. BROWN's election to Congress after the passage of 127 years, and her present status as Ranking Democratic member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee. But, the recent Florida GOP redistricting plot and TVOne Roland Martin interview where she states "if you are not at the table, you are on the menu," is cause to rethink the earlier musical premise.

Special acknowledgements go to Ralph Cooper, Mel King, Pamela King, Eva Kerr, South End Technology Center at Tent City, Julius Hayes, Allene Carter, Dr. Fari Nzinga, Todd Williams, Ronald Jackson, Sr., Wendy McClinton, Larry Williams, Gregory Crawford, Jas Boothe, Irvin Goodwin, Dr. Virginia Brown, Dr. William Lawson, Prof. Joel Beeson, Prof. Chad Williams, Ernest Washington, Jr., Henry 'Tabu' Taylor, Bonnie Perry, T. Michael Sullivan, Anthony Hawkins and Shantrel Brown; Congressional staffers Ronnie Simmons, Rontel Batie, Stephanie Anim-Yankah, Nick Martinelli, Chester Glover, Reginald McGill, Jackie Gray, Carla Wiley, Jonathan Halpern, William 'Bill' Golembiewski, Hannah Kim, and Reba Raffaelli.

Finally, we close by quoting decorated Korean War veteran Rep. CHARLES B. RANGEL (D-NY)—"No American let alone African American who serves this great nation deserves to be left on the streets of America homeless or alone. And shouldn't disproportionate African American homeless veterans be a 21st century civil rights issue?"

JILL FELLMAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Jill Fellman for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

As a Jefferson County native, Jill attended Jefferson County schools and then became an educator in the Jefferson County public school system for 30 years. After retiring from her education career, Jill served as an elected member of the Jefferson County School Board of Education from November 2011 to November 2015.

Currently, she is a member of the Jefferson County Schools Foundation Board, the Audit Committee, the Wheat Ridge Education Alli-

ance, and the City of Arvada Coordinating Council. She also serves as Secretary for the Arvada Community Food Bank board and is Vice Chair for the Sooper Credit Union Foundation board. With her endless amount of energy and passion for first rate public education, she also serves on the board of Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth and is an Edgewater Collective community partner.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jill Fellman for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION WEEK AND RECOGNIZING NORTH CAROLINA'S EFFORTS TO ADVANCE GLOBAL EDUCATION

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week, November 16–20, marks the 16th annual International Education Week (IEW), which is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education that serves as an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of international education and exchange programs worldwide and encourages participation in them. This important week is observed all across the United States and in more than 100 countries overseas. I want to recognize some of the efforts within my home state of North Carolina to provide a global education experience to as many students as possible.

The theme of this year's IEW is 'International Education: Advancing Access for All,' which is critical because opportunities to learn global competency skills are not currently accessible to all students.

I want to call attention to the North Carolina State Board of Education, whose members help to guide NC's global education efforts via their 2013 report, 'Preparing Students for the World: Final Report of the State Board of Education's Task Force on Global Education.' As noted in this report, "Students in North Carolina are no longer preparing for future jobs in North Carolina. They are preparing to work and compete in a global workplace. The impact of cultural sensitivities and the capability to collaborate in a diverse international setting . . . cannot be understated. Our State Board of Education in North Carolina is rightfully focusing on these skill areas, as they will become even bigger factors and differentiators in determining the future success of our students."

At least in part due to this statewide focus on global education, there are an increasing number of course offerings and enrollment in language studies and an increasing number of K–12 dual language/immersion programs in North Carolina. Today, there are at least 15 world languages being taught in our state's K–12 schools, including Chinese, Russian, Arabic and Hindi. And there are over 100 programs—a number that is rapidly growing—utilizing several different learning models being implemented in school districts across the state. The State Board of Education recently