

about what we do with these men and women when they come home, whose lives have been changed dramatically. These are the costs of war, and they don't get nearly the attention on the Senate floor, in the media, or among policymakers as do the actually going to war and sending our troops.

It is shameful that veterans have these rates of unemployment, addiction, suicide, and homelessness. We have made progress on homelessness through a combination of increased Federal investments and improved services. Over the past 5 years, homelessness among veterans has declined 36 percent, but too many remain on the streets.

Veterans comprise 12 percent of the Nation's adult homeless population. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, some 48,000 veterans were homeless—including 1,200 in my State of Ohio—on a given night in January when a census, if you will, was taken about homelessness. That is 48,000 too many. It is a disgrace that they serve our country with honor, and thousands are left without a roof over their head. Think about that. We send them off to war. They are sometimes damaged by their time in combat or their time in the military, and we don't care enough to find them places to live and find them drug treatment and find them jobs and give the kind of help to them that they gave to our country.

I met the veterans the organizations serve—organizations such as the VFW, American Legion, these groups and counties called veteran service organizations. My State is blessed to have one in each of our 88 counties. I hear about their stories of perseverance. They are inspiring.

I visited the Joseph House in Cincinnati, where Nathan Pelletier and his team of dedicated staff and volunteers provided addiction treatment and transitional housing to veterans. We heard from Britton Carter, who was formerly homeless. He completed the treatment program at Joseph House. He now works as a case manager helping other struggling veterans. He spoke about the trials he has overcome. He said:

As a small youth I fell in love with playing army men. My mom would buy me little army men, and I dreamed of one day being a soldier.

God had given me the gift of being a pretty good basketball player and as such I became the first freshman to play and start on any varsity team. With success came fans and countless people, many of whom had an agenda that didn't necessarily have my best interest at stake.

From the early years of high school I found myself star struck, and I would end up in the company of those who used drugs—first pot and wine, later I was introduced to heroin and cocaine.

With the grace of God, I was given the opportunity to attend college at New Mexico Military Institution in Roswell, NM. There were other offers from schools, but I was attracted to the opportunity of being able to play army man once again.

I was caught with drugs and kicked out of school, and as a result I lost the chance to

become an officer in the United States military. I went to another college—only to have my drug addiction lead me to poor choices that brought my career closer and closer to an end, where the only thing I felt I had to hold onto would be a career in the Army.

I enlisted, and discovered that being away from home . . . left me face-to-face with those old demons, and once again I was being discharged. . . . It wasn't long after my return . . . that I found myself in and out of trouble. Having no insurance to pay for the treatment I truly needed to address my addiction, and nearly a life sentence on the installment plan and years of struggle. . . .

He goes on.

[The Joseph House] was the one place that believed in never leaving any soldier behind—the Joseph House.

It was while at the Joseph House that I had the opportunity to get the treatment I so badly needed. . . . Today, thanks to God and his mercy. . . .

He goes on to talk about some of the things he has done. He has written a play. He has produced a play. He has done wonderful things, especially for his fellow veterans. His story should serve as a reminder to all of us that we should not leave the men and women who serve this country.

There are so many stories like his. In October I was in Dayton, where I met with Robert White at the Homefull organization—Homefull as opposed to the homeless. He served 4 years in the Army Reserves and 1 year on Active Duty. He was honorably discharged in 1980 and spent years working, facing challenges that he said left him “lower than low.” He said, “As soon as I left for basic training, I was homeless.” He talked about his work, his time in shelters. He said the result was always the same. He said, “I entered homeless, and no matter how good I did, I still left homeless.”

Then, on the July Fourth weekend 7 years ago, he entered Homefull’s VA per diem transitional supportive housing program. He became a model guest at Homefull. He got a job in Trotwood, a community near Dayton. He still has the same job. Homefull connected Mr. White with its partner organization, which helped him achieve home ownership. Today he has gone from homeless veteran to owner of his own home. That is because of his community in Dayton, because of this organization Homefull, and it is because of the partnership with the Veterans’ Administration, whose funding is always under jeopardy because of many Members of the Senate and House who simply don’t put the same effort into helping veterans as they do into funding the military.

Last month I was in Cleveland. I visited the Supportive Housing Home for Veterans. I visited the Trumbull Metropolitan Housing Authority in Youngstown. These organizations are providing work that is so important. We owe them our support.

Even one veteran on the street means Congress isn’t doing enough to tackle this problem. That is why I joined my colleagues in introducing the Veteran Housing Stability Act of 2015, which

would make meaningful improvements to services for homeless veterans and give more veterans access to housing opportunities.

President Kennedy, in his 1963 Thanksgiving proclamation—I believe the week before he died—said, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”

Sure, we come to this floor. We send people off to battle. Surely we need to do that sometimes. Sure, we come to the floor and talk about veterans, but so often we don’t live up to the obligations to help these veterans deal with their homelessness, to help veterans deal with suicide, with the threat of suicide, the likelihood of suicide for some of them, help our veterans deal with drug addiction, help our veterans deal with mental health issues. Often these are costs of war that we simply don’t discuss on the Senate floor. It is so important that we do. I hope my colleagues will join me in ensuring every veteran has an opportunity to succeed.

TRIBUTE TO MEGHAN DUBYAK

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, in closing, I want to recognize a long-term staff member, a young woman who has served in my office, Meghan Dubyak. She has been my communications director for most of my years in the Senate. She comes from Shaker Heights, OH. She has been a terrific public servant. Today is her last day. This is about her last hour on the job, although she is going with me tonight to do one other appearance. Meghan is planning to get married this summer. She is taking tomorrow off and is going on Monday to join the staff of the Vice President of the United States, JOE BIDEN. She has been an incredible employee. I wish her well. My wife Connie and I will love Meghan as long as we have the privilege of knowing her in the years ahead.

So thank you to Meghan.
I yield the floor.

REMEMBERING OFFICER DANIEL ELLIS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a Kentucky police officer who was tragically lost in the line of duty. Officer Daniel Ellis of the Richmond Police Department was shot while searching an apartment for a robbery suspect on November 4, 2015, and died from his wounds 2 days later. He was 33 years old.

“Our lives will never be the same again, the lives of his fellow officers and of his family will never be the same,” Richmond Police Chief Larry Brock said during Officer Ellis’s funeral. “He turned out to be a great police officer. He was one of those guys that just got it and got it early.”

Officer Ellis started at the department on August 11, 2008. He was known as a kindhearted man who treated others with dignity and respect. One day

while on duty, he saw a man in business clothes carrying a tent and walking down the street. When asked, the man told Officer Ellis that he had a job interview the next morning and had nowhere to spend the night. Officer Ellis paid to get him a room.

Daniel graduated from Eastern Kentucky University, where his funeral service was held. Most of the school coliseum's 7,000 seats were full for the service. Hundreds of fellow police officers from across Kentucky and other States poured into Richmond to pay their respects.

Members of Officer Ellis's family who are suffering from this loss include his wife, Katie; his son, Luke, who is only 4 years old; his parents, Kelly and Nancy West Ellis; two brothers; a sister; and his paternal grandmother.

I know my colleagues in the United States Senate join me in wishing the Ellis family our utmost condolences after their horrible loss. We are humbled and we are grateful for Officer Daniel Ellis's service and his enormous sacrifice in the line of duty. I hold the deepest admiration and respect for every brave police officer across the Bluegrass State, all of whom put their lives in danger to protect us. Kentucky is thankful these men and women have made a sacred pledge to protect and defend.

Local news Web site WLKY.com published a moving article about Officer Ellis and the outpouring of grief in the Richmond community after his death. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From WLKY.com, Nov. 12, 2015]

THOUSANDS SAY GOODBYE TO SLAIN RICHMOND OFFICER DANIEL ELLIS—CHIEF SAYS “GRIEF IS NEARLY INCONSOLABLE”

(By Carolyn Callahan and Emily Maher)

RICHMOND, KY.—He lost his life doing the job he loved.

Thousands of people were in Richmond on Wednesday to say goodbye to Officer Daniel Ellis.

The 33-year-old was shot a week ago during a robbery investigation.

He died two days later.

The funeral service was held at Alumni Coliseum at Eastern Kentucky University.

Both Daniel and his wife, Katie, graduated from the school.

For the first time since the deadly shooting, Richmond's police chief spoke publicly.

“We have lost our Daniel,” Chief Larry Brock said. “Our collective grief is nearly inconsolable.”

Ellis started with the Richmond Police Department in 2008.

While Brock hoped Ellis would finish his career with the department, he never imagined it would end the way it did.

“Today we say goodbye to Officer Daniel Ellis. Our Daniel. But we will never forget him, his service, or his sacrifice,” Brock said.

Ellis leaves behind a wife and young son.

“Katie, I pledge to you and Luke that you will remain a part of our family. That we will always be there for you, and that you will never walk alone,” Brock said.

The chief said it rained after Ellis died.

“It was as if the angels themselves were crying at the loss of this special young man,” Brock said.

Then hours later, a rainbow appeared over the Richmond Police Department. The chief takes that as a sign that Ellis is still with them.

“Rest easy, Daniel. You have left us too early,” he said.

Shortly before he was killed, Ellis found out he was being promoted to detective.

It's a job at which the chief said he would have excelled.

“From the kindergarten classrooms that he visited, to the courtrooms where his testimony could be counted on to be straightforward and truthful, he will be greatly missed,” East End Church of Christ minister Phillip Shumake said.

Hundreds lined downtown Richmond streets as Ellis received a hero's escort to his final resting place.

Residents in Richmond said they wanted to show their thanks to the man who gave his life protecting theirs.

Black and blue pinwheels and white ribbons with Ellis's badge number line the Eastern Bypass.

Hundreds of officers drove down the street, escorting Ellis to his final resting place, while the community watched and supported an officer who was loved.

“Even though we wear a different badge, he is my brother,” Shane Allen with Richmond Rescue said.

“You're grieving for someone that's not a family member, but he feels like a family member,” community member Shelley Johnson said.

“We were actually on shift the day it happened and we were all trying to find out who it was. He is family,” Allen said.

A kind of family that is brought closer together in times of loss.

“And I was trying to explain to the kids, ‘Mommy, why do you cry?’ And it's like something unexplainable and maybe they can understand that,” Johnson said.

The community stood together to pay their final respects holding signs calling Ellis a hero.

“It's unbelievable. It's really touching to see the support—that even though it's something tragic that has brought this community together so tightly, to see the support for somebody they might not even know. And to see them come out on a day and support him as he goes by to lay at rest,” Allen said.

Hundreds of officers from across the state escorted Ellis on a 100-mile journey to his final resting place.

“We just wanted to show what his service has meant to us,” community member Sarah Roof said.

As he passed by, blue balloons were released into the air as a final tribute to a man the community said will never be forgotten.

“He loved his job. He helped the community and that was his job. And that's what he wanted to do,” Allen said.

Ellis will be laid to rest in Adair County.

The family has asked for donations to be made to the Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation or Supporting Heroes.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the Every Student Succeeds Act that the President signed into law today.

I want to first congratulate my colleagues Senator PATTY MURRAY and Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, who have effectively been able to guide this bill

through the Senate. It has been an honor to watch and participate in this process—a process that has served as a great example of the way the Senate is supposed to work.

When the original Senate version of the Every Child Achieves Act came to the floor for a vote on July 22, 2015, I could not support it because, while it made necessary changes to the No Child Left Behind law, I could not in good conscience support a bill that fell short of investing in the potential and promise of all of our children, especially New Jersey's most vulnerable students. I stood resolute in the belief that if Congress was truly going to invest in our children and grandchildren's future, it was vital that any legislation passed provide support, access, and opportunity to equip the next generation to succeed, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

These needs were particularly poignant given the historic context of the original Elementary and Secondary Education Act as a civil rights bill. Created the same year as the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and just 11 years after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, President Lyndon B. Johnson's original piece of legislation intended to address the gaping gulf in the quality of education received by low-income students in an intensely segregated country. Indeed, this piece of legislation was a vital tool in President Johnson's arsenal on the War on Poverty. It is undeniable that education is a cornerstone of the American Dream to achieve success and financial security. We do our Nation and our children a disservice if we do not do everything in our power to ensure that President Johnson's arsenal is not only maintained, but honed and replenished with robust provisions to fight an evolving battle for educational equity in our schools.

Although I did not vote for the original Senate version of ESEA that passed the Senate in July, I am glad to see a conference report, the Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA, that takes elements from both the House and Senate bill and ultimately is a better bill for all children, teachers, and parents in our country.

Chief among provisions that I believed were problematic was the lack of accountability measures to ensure America's most vulnerable students have access to a quality education. With regards to accountability, it was critical not to be overly prescriptive while still acknowledging an intense need to identify and ask schools and districts to figure out specific plans to turn things around in the lowest performing schools and high schools who fail to graduate one-third of their students. It is also critical to identify where there are groups of students who are consistently performing worse than their peers. I do not believe these changes should come from Washington. Local teachers, principals, and parents are best equipped to know how best to