

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE SERVICE OF BRIAN COOPER, CHIEF CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brian Cooper, Chief Clerk to the Parliamentarian, who is retiring after more than three decades of service to our country.

Brian Cooper has dedicated his career to ensure the good management and orderly function of the U.S. House of Representatives.

As Chief Clerk to the Parliamentarian, much of his work has gone unnoticed.

But it has not gone unappreciated.

From time-keeping to processing bills to preparing for joint sessions of Congress, Brian Cooper has played an integral role in maintaining the integrity of the House of Representatives.

After more than three decades of service, this public servant has more than earned his wings of retirement.

Brian Cooper made the House work better and he will be missed by his many friends and colleagues, whom I join in wishing him well as he embarks on a new chapter in his life of service to others.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER ARMY STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) KENNETH RAY BRADLEY

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Kenneth Ray Bradley who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on May 28, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SSG Bradley died of a heart attack while serving in Baqubah, Iraq.

SSG Bradley was assigned to Company B 588th Engineer Battalion, Fort Hood, Texas. The Utica native was a 19-year Army veteran.

According to the Associated Press, SSG Bradley enjoyed music. Cleveland Washington, SSG Bradley's first cousin, said he liked musical instruments.

"He was left-handed," Washington said. "He blew the trumpet and played the guitar. He always liked music and was in a band."

People who grew up with SSG Bradley and served with him in the Army memorialized him on the "Fallen Heroes of Operation Iraqi Freedom" website.

Sergeant First Class (SFC) Lee of Washington said he was a great leader. "I remember that he was a great NCO and a great leader," SFC Lee said. "He is a true hero and will never be forgotten. God bless his family, friends, and brothers-in-arms."

Sergeant First Class (SFC) Frye of Fort Benning, Georgia, said SSG Bradley would not be forgotten. "You are never forgotten, brother, and your passing caused me so much grief. Your words touched my heart," SFC Frye said. "I remember those days you talked of spending time with your family prior to being ordered to go to Iraq. The fact that your life was cut short, and we're all robbed of your love, hurts me to this day. I only pray your family has found peace in your memories and what a great man you were."

Melvin Waters of Woodbridge, Virginia, offered his condolences to the family. "I would like to convey my sincerest sympathy to Claudia, Brian, and Sandra," Waters said. "Kenney is truly missed by many and he will always live in our thoughts and good deeds."

Specialist (SPC) George Sanchez served with SSG Bradley. "I am currently attending St. Mary's University as a disabled veteran," SPC Sanchez said. "The days I feel like quitting, I think of SSG Bradley, and my other fallen brothers-in-arms. Then I pick myself up and keep going for them. I dedicate my education to their memory. Your sacrifice is not in vain, my friend."

SSG Bradley bravely fought to protect the freedoms we all enjoy. His service to our nation will not be forgotten.

STEM OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 2017

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be introducing the STEM Opportunities Act of 2017. A very similar bill passed the House as part of the America Competes Act of 2010, but unfortunately didn't make it into the enacted law. As a result, every Congress since then, I have worked hard to keep the legislation updated and to convince my colleagues of the urgency of the challenges this bill addresses. Today I am reintroducing this bill with 20 cosponsors. And my colleague Senator HIRONO is introducing a Senate companion bill. The goal of our legislation is to develop and implement evidence-based policies to promote the progress of women and minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) studies and research careers.

The need for full engagement in STEM by women and underrepresented minorities goes beyond enabling individuals to fulfill their dreams of becoming a scientist. Our economic future relies on what we do now to nurture the STEM talent that will be necessary to meet the demands of an increasingly technological and knowledge-based economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that STEM employment is the fastest growing sector, with computer science and engineering jobs among the fastest growing STEM occupations.

If things continue as they are now, however, I fear we will be ill equipped to fill these jobs.

We are seventeen years into the 21st century and the demographics of the STEM workforce do not reflect the diversity of the nation. In 2015, women earned only 19 percent of bachelor's degrees in engineering and 18 percent in computer science. Black and Hispanic students are similarly underrepresented in these fields at the undergraduate level, and the problem is even more pronounced in STEM faculty. Women hold only 23 percent of all tenured and tenure-track positions, while Black and Hispanic faculty combined hold a dismal 6.4 percent of these positions. We need to leverage all of our human capital if we are to achieve the necessary capacity to innovate and to discover.

The STEM Opportunities Act is focused on addressing the leaky pipeline for those who have already chosen a STEM path. First, so that we better understand the nature and scope of the challenges, the STEM Opportunities Act requires more comprehensive demographic data collection on the recipients of federal research awards and on STEM faculty at U.S. universities. These data would be available to researchers to study the participation and trajectories of women and underrepresented minorities in STEM so that policy makers can design more effective policies and practices to reduce barriers.

Next, this bill requires the development of consistent federal policies, such as no-cost award extensions, for recipients of federal research awards who have caregiving responsibilities, including care for a newborn or newly adopted child and care for an immediate family member who is sick. The bill also requires consistent federal guidance to grant reviewers and program officers on best practices to minimize the effects of implicit bias in the review of federal research grants. It requires NSF to provide guidance to universities and OSTP to provide guidance to Federal laboratories to aid them in identifying any cultural and institutional barriers limiting the recruitment, retention, and achievement of women and minorities in academic and government STEM research careers and developing and implementing current best practices for reducing such barriers. Finally, the legislation authorizes NSF to award grants to universities to implement or expand research-based practices targeted specifically at increasing the recruitment and retention of minority students and faculty.

Mr. Speaker, in developing this legislation, we solicited extensive input from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to ensure that the guidance and requirements reflect today's needs and opportunities without unduly burdening our research universities. The result is a bill that attempts to systematically address the full suite of issues facing both female and minority STEM researchers, from work-life balance policies, to campus climate, to better data collection, to recruitment and retention practices. This bill proposes concrete and evidence-based solutions to the indisputable reality that our nation continues to fall well short of engaging our entire talent pool in STEM careers. That disparity in our STEM workforce

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

will continue to have real and increasing consequences to our social, economic, and national security if we do not begin to implement scalable solutions soon.

I want to thank Senator HIRONO for joining me in introducing a Senate companion bill, and all of the Members of the House and Senate who have already cosponsored this legislation. I urge the rest of my colleagues to join us and to help us move this legislation forward into law.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALL-
EN MISSISSIPPI ARMY NA-
TIONAL GUARD SERGEANT (SGT)
DANIEL RYAN VARNADO

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Mississippi Army National Guard Sergeant (SGT) Daniel Ryan Varnado who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 23, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SGT Varnado was killed when his military vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Haswa, Iraq. Also killed were Specialist (SPC) Bryan Edward Barron, Sergeant (SGT) Audrey Daron Lunsford, and Sergeant First Class (SFC) Saburant Parker.

SGT Varnado was assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi. SGT Varnado, a Saucier resident, joined the Mississippi Army National Guard in November 2000.

According to a website created in his memory, SGT Varnado played baseball growing up for Harrison Central High School in Lyman until he graduated in 1999. He also played baseball for Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College while pursuing a degree in education. SGT Varnado wanted to be a baseball coach.

The website's author describes SGT Varnado as the perfect husband, father, son, and friend. He is also described as a person with faith and a love for the Lord which kept him strong in times of war. Additionally, the author says he will be deeply missed.

The Army National Guard Readiness Center in Gulfport has been named in honor of SGT Varnado.

Mississippi Army National Guard Brigadier General (BG) John Rhodes was the 1–155th infantry battalion commander in 2005. BG Rhodes recently said SGT Varnado will always be remembered along with those who died with him.

"SGT Daniel Ryan Varnado, SPC Bryan Edward Barron, SGT Audrey Daron Lunsford, and SFC Saburant Parker are remembered in many ways, but we knew them as warriors who represented something larger than themselves," BG Rhodes said. "They operated in a hostile environment and faced the dangers of combat on a regular basis. Yet, if given the choice, they would not have wanted it any other way. They sacrificed their lives trying to provide a better life for people who they did not even know. This is who they were and what they represented. They exemplified the modern day Mississippi Riflemen. Stand Fast, Mississippians! Stand Fast!"

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Andrew Robertson served as company commander of Charlie Company, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, MS Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi, serving operational control under 2–11 Armed Cavalry Regiment (ACR), U.S. Army. He says there were no greater people than the Charlie Company soldiers who endured being in the most dangerous and highest casualty area of operation as part of OIF III under Task Force 155 Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

"In 2005, there were no greater Americans than our fallen patriots, Charlie Company Infantrymen and their families. None greater. This, I believe, America needs to know," LTC Robertson said.

SGT Varnado is survived by his wife, Sharon Shavers, and son, Kannon Varnado.

SGT Varnado's sacrifice to protect our freedoms will always be remembered.

IN RECOGNITION OF REV. JOHN
BEATTY KAHL'S 25 YEARS OF
SERVICE

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend John Beatty Kahl for his 25 years of dedicated service to our community as an ordained minister.

Rev. Kahl attended Lenoir Rhyne College where he graduated magna cum laude with a triple major in math, physics, and chemistry. As a driven scholar, he received the American Institutes of Chemistry Award his senior year of college and became a member of multiple academic honor societies. While in college, he enlisted in the Navy and went on to Officer Candidate School where he was commissioned as an officer.

After graduation, Rev. Kahl served his country for four and a half years as an officer in the United States Navy. During his service as a Submariner on the USS *Key West*, he felt God pulling on his heart to pursue another career. This calling led Rev. Kahl to attend Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, where he graduated cum laude. He was ordained as a minister on May 29, 1992 at Lenoir Rhyne College. Now, he is not only the head pastor at New Life Lutheran Church, but also the principal at Christ the King Christian Academy. He and his wife, Cindy, have two children, Joshua and Lisa.

Rev. Kahl has shown immense commitment to God and his country over the years. He is a man of principled values and strong faith who continues to embody the true meaning of public service. It is my hope that he will remain an active leader in the community for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in honoring Rev. John Beatty Kahl for his 25 years of service to his community.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALL-
EN MISSISSIPPI ARMY NA-
TIONAL GUARD SERGEANT
FIRST CLASS (SFC) SABURANT
PARKER

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Mississippi Army National Guard Sergeant First Class (SFC) Saburant Parker, known to his friends as "Sabot" (sab-oh), who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 23, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SFC Parker was killed when his military vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Haswa, Iraq. Also killed were Specialist (SPC) Bryan Edward Barron, Sergeant (SGT) Audrey Daron Lunsford, and Sergeant (SGT) Daniel Ryan Varnado.

SFC Parker, a Foxworth native, was assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi. SFC Parker served in the Mississippi Army National Guard for 16 years and served with the 155th Separate Armored Brigade in Bosnia. SFC Parker was also employed as a loader operator at Angie Lumber Company in Angie, Louisiana, and wrestled on the weekends for Southern Championship Wrestling. He was the 2004 champion of the cruiser weight division.

Major General (MG) Harold A. Cross, Mississippi Army National Guard Adjutant General, posthumously awarded SFC Parker the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star and the Mississippi Medal of Valor during a memorial service held at Hurricane Creek Baptist Church in Hattiesburg. He spoke to the audience during the service and was quoted in an Associated Press article.

"Once again we come together in a small community to honor a soldier," MG Cross said. "It comes to mind that over 1.2 million people have paid the ultimate sacrifice in our 228-year history that we might be free."

Mississippi Army National Guard Brigadier General (BG) John Rhodes served as the 1–155th infantry battalion commander in 2005. BG Rhodes recently said SFC Parker will be remembered along with those who died with him.

"SFC Parker, SPC Bryan Edward Barron, SGT Audrey Daron Lunsford, and SGT Daniel Ryan Varnado are remembered in many ways, but we knew them as warriors who represented something larger than themselves," BG Rhodes said. "They operated in a hostile environment and faced the dangers of combat on a regular basis. Yet, if given the choice, they would not have wanted it any other way. They sacrificed their lives trying to provide a better life for people who they didn't even know. This is who they were and what they represented. They exemplified the modern day Mississippi Riflemen. Stand Fast, Mississippians! Stand Fast!"

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