

and couldn't wait to teach their baby boy soccer.

Jonathan's unwavering courage, huge heart, and strong Christian faith are the reasons why he answered his calling to join the Army. He was assigned to the 4th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He was pursuing a medical career after the Army and, having already completed part of his EMT and paramedic training, was on the path to attending medical school.

Jonathan was part of a scout group sweeping an area in Afghanistan and doing what he does best—protecting others—when his group came under enemy fire and he suffered fatal wounds. At only age 20, Jonathan was taken from us much too soon. On April 7, the First Assembly of God Church in Griffin, Georgia, celebrated the life of Jonathan, and he was laid to rest by his close family and friends.

I am proud to stand before you and honor the life of PFC Jonathan Davis and thank him for his dedicated service to our country. His endless generosity and brave spirit are among the many reasons he will be missed so much by all who had the privilege to know him.

Joan and I extend our deepest sympathy to the friends and family of Jonathan, and we will never forget his great sacrifice for our Nation and those that allow us to live free every day.

Jonathan, until we meet again some day, thank you, Brother.

STOP MILITARY RAPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise again for the 19th time to highlight the epidemic of rape and sexual assault in the military.

By the military's own figures, 19,000 sexual assaults and rapes occur each year, but only 13 percent of the members of the military actually report them.

Last week, I met with Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, along with my colleagues, to discuss DOD's new report of data on rape and sexual assault in the military. The report shows a slight increase in reports of rape and assault but a startling decrease in the number of charges brought against reported perpetrators. With a decrease in charges came a significant decrease in prosecutions, in punishments, and in convictions. The numbers, frankly, are very discouraging.

When I left the meeting, I was only pleased about one thing. Secretary Panetta and I agreed that the only way to solve this problem is with an increase in prosecutions. We agree on the results to be achieved, but for right now, we do not agree on the steps to achieve it.

After our meeting, Secretary Panetta announced new initiatives, but DOD's three major proposals will not increase

prosecutions, convictions, or punishments.

Proposal one: elevate cases of rape and sexual assault to higher-ranking officials in the chain of command. Military commanders today told me that many are already having them handled by colonels and captains, yet this does not result in more prosecutions. I believe the cases have to be handled by an impartial office within the military but outside the chain of command.

Proposal number two: establish a special victim's unit in each service of the military. These units have been in place in the Army since 2009. I'm impressed with the training program that is offered to the various members of the investigation and prosecution within the Army. But again, we have not seen an increase in prosecutions, convictions, or punishments as of yet.

Proposal three: create a centralized database of these proceedings and cases. This is a good thing. It's already required in the Department of Defense as a result of the NDAA 2009.

So for all intents and purposes, all of these initiatives are already in place to some extent. The problem is the chain of command, and let me explain.

Claudia Castillo, an Army corporal whose attempts for justice back in 2003 and 2004 were thwarted repeatedly by commanding officers, including a high-ranking lieutenant colonel, all of whom were unmoved by her reports of sexual assault and harassment.

Corporal Castillo was on combat deployment in Iraq when she awoke to a fellow specialist on top of her sexually assaulting her and using force. She was in shock and screamed until he left. She immediately reported the assault to her platoon sergeant, who responded with a lack of surprise or concern. He advised her to wait while he "looked into it." He did not have any advice for how she could get help or go forward.

Corporal Castillo also encountered several incidents of harassment, stalking, and erratic behavior by a much older staff sergeant. She would wake up to find him standing by her bed while she slept. Her reports to command were greeted by ridicule and not taken seriously.

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Command discretion empowers a commander to decide if the case goes forward to a court-martial. Even if very high-ranking commanders are in charge of these cases, captains and colonels are not shielded from the conflicts of interest that exist in the chain of command.

Victims should have the benefit of impartiality by objective experts, which is why my bill, H.R. 3435, attempts to do that. We need to overhaul the current military justice system, and I will continue to tell stories like Corporal Castillo's until military justice means justice for all.

DEE COOK—CHILD ADVOCATES OF FORT BEND COUNTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dee Cook, a distinguished leader in my home community of Fort Bend County, Texas. For over 40 years, Dee has given her time and her energy to help with the children of Fort Bend County, in part through her commitment and support of Child Advocates of Fort Bend County, which fights on behalf of abused and neglected children.

Dee has served as the grant officer of the George Foundation since 1988. The George Foundation contributes to many worthy causes throughout Fort Bend County, and Dee has played a pivotal role in making sure the generosity of the foundation is directed to causes that help our communities the most. However, it is her generous contributions through the George Foundation to Child Advocates of Fort Bend County that bring me to the floor today.

By contributing her time, energy and resources, Dee has enabled Child Advocates to serve over 8,000 children throughout Fort Bend County. Under her leadership, Dee Cook has helped teach the staff and volunteers to be better leaders, more effective program managers, and to achieve the dream of helping the most vulnerable children in our communities in ways we never thought possible 20 years ago. Her contributions are helping children and, in turn, are strengthening our communities and neighborhoods. On their behalf, she has given a voice to those who desperately need one.

Dee's efforts to build philanthropic leaders do not stop with Child Advocates. She has also started an annual 8-month Leadership for Nonprofit Excellence course to teach the rising stars of Fort Bend County the skills they need to harness and grow Fort Bend's strong nonprofit community. Most importantly, she has led a cooperative effort between the George Foundation and the Sugar Land Chamber of Commerce to create Youth in Philanthropy, the YIP Team. The YIP Team is 100 Fort Bend County high school juniors and seniors who spend a school year seeing how volunteerism and philanthropy co-exist to serve our Fort Bend community. At the end of the school year, the YIP Team will put their knowledge to the test by awarding monetary grants to nonprofits—life changing, indeed.

I commend Dee Cook for a lifetime of service to Fort Bend County. I simply want to say to Dee, on behalf of the people of Fort Bend County, thank you. Fort Bend County would not be the county that we all know and love without Dee Cook.

In closing, Dee's love for Fort Bend County will be on display tonight at Constellation Field as Fort Bend's new pro-baseball team, the Sugar Land Skeeters, has its first home game. I join Dee and the people of Sugar Land and Fort Bend County in saying, Go Skeeters.