

family, but, last year, something else happened that was significant in his life.

Kyungmin Cho, an undocumented student in America, was allowed to enlist in the U.S. Army. The program he enlisted in is called The Military Accessions Vital to National Interest Program. It is known by the acronym MAVNI. This program allows immigrants like Kyungmin, with special skills “vital to the national interest,” to enlist in our Armed Forces. More than 900 DACA recipients with these skills, just like Kyungmin, have joined the military. They took the oath. They said they were willing to die for this country and serve in our military.

Some Trump administration officials have claimed that DACA recipients are taking jobs away from Americans, but Kyungmin and hundreds of others have vital skills that our military just couldn't find in other places.

Kyungmin, with many other Dreamers, is now waiting to ship out to basic training. He continues his undergraduate studies and works full time as he waits for a chance to serve the United States of America. He is willing to risk his life for a country that doesn't recognize him as a legal resident.

He wrote me a letter, which reads:

DACA means everything to me. It gives me the opportunity to work and support myself. . . . It is with great pride that I call myself American even though my status says otherwise.

I recently visited the Phoenix Military Academy, one of the six military academies that is part of the Chicago Public School System. I am proud to say Chicago Public Schools hosts the largest Junior ROTC Program in America, with 10,000 cadets. You ought to see them marching at the Memorial Day Parade—just wave after wave of these uniformed, young high school students. It turns out that many of these cadets are Dreamers who want to do just what Kyungmin has done—volunteer to enlist in the U.S. military.

How can you question this man's commitment to America if he is willing to die for this country? How many kids in high school would step up with that kind of courage? He has demonstrated, and others have, too, that they can give a lot to our country.

Without DACA, if it ends March 5, it is over for Kyungmin and 900 others who have volunteered to serve our Nation. They are finished. They cannot continue their service to America, even though the skills they bring are necessarily vital to our national interests. For the thousands of Junior ROTC cadets in Chicago who drill every day and take this seriously, it is over for them too. There is no avenue left for them to step forward and serve our Nation.

Would America be better if we deported Kyungmin back to South Korea—a country he may not even remember? Will we be a stronger country if we lose this kind of courage and this kind of commitment of a young man

who is willing to risk his life for a country that does not legally recognize him as part of its population?

In a few weeks, we are going to get to go home for the holidays. I am looking forward to it. I really am. It is a big holiday for my family, and I am sure it is for many others. Can we really go home and enjoy our families, knowing we have not answered the most basic question that the President said to us on September 5, when he asked: Can Congress act? Can you pass a law? Can you solve a problem? That is what it comes down to when it is DACA and the Dreamers.

When I introduced the Dream Act with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, the Republican of South Carolina, he said: The moment of reckoning is coming.

He is right. LINDSEY is right. It is a moment of reckoning for this young man. More importantly, it is a moment of reckoning for this Senate as to whether we are serious about why we were elected. If we cannot solve this basic problem in a matter of days and weeks, shame on us. We are not overworked, for goodness' sake. We are just not inspired to do it at this point, and we need to be inspired to do it.

We shouldn't do to this young man and to the thousands of others who count on us the unacceptable and walk away from our responsibility. Now is the time, before the end of this year, to let this young man know, when he is called to serve our country—and to proudly do so—that we have done everything we can to clear his path.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

#### REMEMBERING BOATSWAIN'S MATE SECOND CLASS JOSEPH LEON GEORGE

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise to honor the heroism of Boatswain's Mate Second Class Joseph Leon George.

On December 7, 1941, 26-year-old Joe George served as a crew member aboard the USS *Vestal*, a repair ship that was moored next to the USS *Arizona* at Pearl Harbor. The attack on Pearl Harbor was a history-defining event for our Nation, one we humbly observe each year to remember and honor the 2,403 Americans who perished.

On that day, Joe George, along with so many other courageous heroes, would take swift and decisive action, putting his own life on the line to save sailors whom he had never met and would never know.

When the USS *Arizona* was attacked, the forward ammunition magazine of the ship exploded—we have all seen that very famous photograph of the *Arizona*—and engulfed countless sailors in the inferno. Joe George, from his post on the nearby repair boat, recognized six badly burned sailors who were trapped in the control tower on the *Arizona*'s main mast, with no escape options available.

Despite the fact that he was ordered to cut the line—to cut the rope—between the *Vestal* and the sinking *Arizona*, Joe relentlessly heaved a line, over and over, which spanned a distance of almost 80 feet between the two ships, until Joe was finally able to reach the sailors with his rope.

Joe's selfless actions saved six sailors who would have otherwise perished in the flames on the USS *Arizona* that day. While two of those six would succumb to their injuries shortly thereafter, the remaining four survivors have Joe to thank for their lives.

Amidst all the chaos that day, Joe George was never identified as the sailor who threw that lifeline. In fact, the four survivors diligently sought for information to recognize the man whom they were never able to thank—Joe George, the person who saved their lives.

It wasn't until 36 years later that the unknown sailor would be acknowledged when Joe George conducted an interview with the University of North Texas on August 5, 1978. Joe George contributed his experiences while serving during the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor as part of the university's oral history for the “Day of Infamy.”

This was the first time Joe would speak of the event, confirmed by his ship log records, commanding officer's remarks, and, most importantly, the two living survivors that have Joe to thank for their lives.

Joe's actions that day, which we find hard to match words that do it justice, are nothing short of what an American hero is in servitude, dedication, and sacrifice.

While the years of searching for Joe and establishing the basis for proper recognition do not go unappreciated, it is with great respect and admiration that we take a moment to honor this distinguished sailor's actions so long ago.

The specific events of December 7, 1941, 76 years ago today, continue to age with each passing year, but the memories and stories of heroes like Joe thrive as our Nation reflects in humility and gratitude.

It is with great respect that I recognize this time today to honor Joe George. Some 76 years ago today, Joe's actions saved six sailors.

Today Joe's family will receive the Navy Bronze Star for Valor at the remembrance ceremony at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. This is the first time a medal has been presented on the Memorial of the USS *Arizona*.

I was honored to work with Colorado Springs resident Donald Stratton to solidify this honor for Joe George. Don is one of the sailors who was saved, and he has been fighting for decades to make sure this day of recognition would take place. So 76 years later, we culminate the work of Don Stratton's mission to commemorate the man who the Stratton family has everything to be thankful for.

I am beyond words with excitement to be part of this momentous occasion

with so many others who worked tirelessly over the years to make this happen. My hope is that Joe's valiant story joins the permanent foundation of our Nation's history for future generations to recognize, understand, and appreciate the sacrifice of the countless heroes who have come before them.

I had the incredible privilege of spending Veterans Day just a few weeks ago with Donald Stratton and his family in Colorado Springs. I was in his living room as he and his wife shared their experiences together.

Donald Stratton talked about what it was like to be on fire with five of his shipmates shimmying across that rope to the vessel and to their freedom, to their safety.

I was in that living room on Veterans Day when the family received a phone call from the Colorado Springs City Council, naming a bridge in honor of Donald Stratton. I saw the exuberance and joy that the family shared at that recognition.

Donald Stratton's service didn't end at Pearl Harbor. After a year in the hospital, he would return to the Pacific to fight in mission after mission.

Now, 76 years later, Donald Stratton's last mission is complete with the recognition of the man who saved his life.

I want to read a letter that will be presented at the memorial service at Pearl Harbor where Joe George, the hero who saved so many lives, will be awarded the Bronze Star.

Dear Mr. Stratton and the George family, Dawn broke seven decades ago on this day to a world at war. The peaceful waters of this harbor churned in violent reaction to a vicious attack that changed forever the course of our nation. You know, you were here. All of you here today are united as families, soldiers, sailors and airmen through blood and sacrifice of so many who gave so much.

The recognition of Joe George is an exclamation point to the thousands of servicemembers on the U.S.S. Arizona and the men he saved, and the families that exist today—

Who are celebrating in Pearl Harbor today—

because of his heroic actions. This has been a long time coming, a last mission for rightful recognition. As the days march forward so too have far too many of our World War II veterans—please know that your work to achieve this one last salute to courage proves that you will never be forgotten. These still waters will ripple for eternity in awe of your tireless and unyielding dedication to this great country.

On August 15, 1945 my grandfather stationed in France wrote a letter to his family that started with these words, "Aha, that day, 14 August, is indeed a history making day, and last night at twelve o'clock when at last all the rumors were confirmed that the world was at peace I said a silent prayer and know that it won't be long until we are all together again." To all who are present today in spirit and in person—you are making history, bringing our nation together once again, as this final mission is accomplished giving due recognition for valor in combat, for heroic and meritorious service. In the words of Donald Stratton, on December 7, 1941, "Everybody had to be somewhere." Today's ceremony reminds our na-

tion of how truly blessed we are because you were here.

Mr. President, this is very well likely the last memorial service at Pearl Harbor that will have survivors of the USS *Arizona* in attendance, and I hope that Americans across the country will take the time to reflect on the greatness of so many who have left us behind now but who left us a country that we can be so proud of. We have enjoyed 76 years of freedom thanks to them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Georgia.

#### TAX REFORM BILL

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, last week the Senate finally broke through the gridlock and voted to change our archaic Tax Code once and for all. It only took 31 years to get here.

As to regulatory relief, so far this year this body and this administration have removed 860 regulations and rules, from the rule book here in Washington, that had been sucking the very life out of our free enterprise system over the last 8 years or so. But along with regulatory relief and unleashing our energy potential, this is the single most important thing we can do to unleash our economic growth and bring relief to American workers. These changes to the Tax Code are a win for American families, American workers, and American businesses.

Let me give just a couple of examples. A family of four that makes a median income today of \$73,000 a year will see their tax bill go down by \$2,200 a month. That is a 60-percent reduction in their Federal income taxes. A single payer, a single mom with one child, making the median income, will get a 75-percent tax cut. The standard deduction is doubled. The child care credit is doubled to \$2,000. The individual mandate that was unleashed on the American people by ObamaCare is eliminated.

By the way, just in 2014 alone—that is the latest year we have any official record from the IRS—this insidious mandate fined 8 million Americans \$2 billion. The irony of that is that almost half of those people make less than \$25,000 a year.

In addition to those changes, the one I love and the one my mother and father will love—they were public school teachers—is that the teacher expense deduction has been doubled under this bill. In addition, 6 million taxpayers have been removed from the Federal income tax roll. That is just the half of it.

Businesses see their corporate tax rate go from 35 percent to 20 percent, allowing them to create jobs here in America and expand production and compete with the rest of the world. Due to our archaic repatriation tax, we are the last country in the world to have a double tax on profits made by U.S. companies around the world. That is \$2.6 trillion, by some estimates, that

we hope will be reinvested here in the United States.

According to outside analysts, this bill creates 1 million new jobs, and the average compensation of the average family in America should go up by \$4,000—some estimate as high as \$9,000 per year.

The GDP only has to go from 1.9 percent to 2.1 percent to more than pay for all of this. That is not my estimate. That is the estimate of the Joint Committee on Tax. If you don't believe them, then, the Congressional Budget Office, with which we have all kinds of problems, say that we only have to grow the economy 0.4 percent. So anywhere from 1.9 to 2.3 percent growth would more than pay for this investment in the American worker. I would argue, because of the last two quarters, that we are already seeing 3 percent growth, primarily, because of the expectation that we are going to act on tax and because of the reality of the fact that we have been moving on the regulatory regime that has been perpetrated on the American worker these last 8 years.

There are a lot of benefits, but in my opinion the person who benefits from this tax bill the most is that person in America who gets a job.

When it comes to the corporate rate, I personally have seen firsthand how important it is to have a rate that allows American workers to compete with their counterparts around the world. The most stimulative part of this tax bill, in my opinion, is this corporate tax cut, because of the impact it will have on our businesses and workers and because it creates a level playing field with the rest of the world.

Let's be very clear. My original goal was 15 percent because I know this is a dynamic situation, where the rest of the world today is going to move because of what we are doing.

Both the House and the Senate agreed on 20 percent. Now there is some talk about changing it in conference. My question is this. The House approved 20 percent and the Senate approved 20 percent. The purpose of this conference is to work between those two decisions to find the differences and mull those into a finer bill that both the House and Senate can vote on. My question for this body and for this conference is this: What is between 20 and 20? I don't understand. This should be a no-brainer.

The best thing we can do for people in the United States who work with their hands—these are people who punch a timeclock, just like I did when I was working my way through college—is to create a level playing field for the rest of the world and lower the corporate tax rate. The current rate sends jobs overseas and keeps our workers from competing on a level playing field. We have the best workforce in the history of the world, and yet we have hamstrung them such that other companies can come to the United States and buy our companies