

Every year, Congress votes on this pay raise, and every year that I have been a Member of this body, I have stood against it. It's simply not right for us to give ourselves more money when there are so many people waiting for an increase in the minimum wage.

Many of my colleagues feel the same way about the Congressional pay raise, but unfortunately the House leadership did not allow us to vote for this specific item, because it was included within a broader spending bill. Voting against this bill would mean voting against billions of dollars for our roads and other worthwhile projects. Rather, we were forced to voice our opposition in the form of a procedural vote, and I did so.

There are thousands of people in my district who hold minimum wage positions, people I was elected to serve. I would only be serving myself if I voted to raise my salary, and that is not why I'm here.

I will continue to vote against congressional pay raises until the minimum wage is increased for working families.

#### TRIBUTE TO IRENE MARTINEZ

### HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 10, 2003*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before this body of Congress and this nation today to recognize the thirty years of service that Irene Martinez has dedicated to the children of the Manzanola School District. Irene is retiring after having served as both a cook and teacher's aide since 1973. As we mark her retirement, I would like to commend Irene for the devotion that she has shown to her students over the years.

Irene began her career with the Manzanola School District as a teacher's aide, though quickly switched careers and became a cook. She loved her job and says she will truly miss the students. Irene has seen three generations pass through her schools, having served the grandparents of some of today's students. Irene is looking forward to her retirement, with plans to do some gardening and spend time with her family.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize the contributions Irene Martinez has made to the health and well being of Colorado's children. Irene will certainly be missed by the children under her care and by her co-workers who have come to know and admire her remarkable dedication. Irene, I wish you all the best in your retirement. Thank you for your many years of exemplary service.

#### THE TRAGIC DEATH OF JOSEPH CAMARA, HUSBAND, FATHER, POLICE OFFICER AND PATRIOT

### HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 10, 2003*

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, September 1, a good and courageous man gave his life for his country. Joseph M. Camara was tragically killed while serving his nation in Iraq, as a member of the

Rhode Island National Guard. In civilian life, as in military life, Sergeant Camara was a man dedicated to protecting his fellow citizens. He was a highly respected and deeply admired police officer in the City of New Bedford. Mr. Camara leaves behind his wife and three children, and they are joined in their grieving at the loss of this patriot by hundreds of thousands of their fellow citizens in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Of course nothing we can say will alleviate the pain that Mr. Camara's family feels at this untimely death, but we can at least demonstrate to them how deeply we sympathize with them and it is important for us to recognize here in the United States House of Representatives the terrible sacrifice Mr. Camara made in the service of his country.

Mr. Speaker, the citizens of New Bedford, where Mr. Camara lived, raised his family, and served with great distinction as a police officer are especially devastated by his death. The people of the city have with one voice expressed their most profound condolences to the Camara family. And the depth of that feeling has been well conveyed by a series of articles in the New Bedford Standard Times about this terrible incident.

Mr. Speaker, to commemorate Joseph Camara, to recognize appropriately in the United States Congress the enormous debt that we owe his wife and children, and to pay tribute to the people of New Bedford, who have been so steadfast in their support of the Camara family, I ask that the articles from the New Bedford Standard Times about the death of Joseph Camara in the service of his country be printed here.

[From the New Bedford Standard Times, Sept. 3, 2003]

#### NEW BEDFORD POLICE OFFICER KILLED IN IRAQ (By Steve Urbon)

CRANSTON, R.I.—A New Bedford police officer became the first SouthCoast resident killed in action in the Iraq war when a home-made land mine exploded on a highway near Baghdad on Monday, killing two National Guardsmen.

Staff Sgt. Joseph M. Camara, 40, married and the father of three, was on patrol with two other guardsmen from Rhode Island's 115th Military Police Company when the device exploded beneath their Humvee and ignited the fuel and ammunition aboard, Lt. Col. Michael McNamara of the Rhode Island National Guard said yesterday at a press conference in Cranston announcing the deaths.

He said Sgt. Camara, a patrolman in the New Bedford Police Department when not on National Guard duty, was killed instantly as was Sgt. Charles Caldwell, 38, of North Providence, who was married with no children. Sgt. Caldwell was driving the vehicle in a convoy in the late morning on a road north of Baghdad, and Sgt. Camara was riding in the passenger seat as vehicle commander.

Spc. Edmund Aponte, 35, of Providence, who was manning the vehicle's machine gun at the time, suffered burns and shrapnel wounds and is hospitalized but expected to make a complete recovery, Lt. Col. McNamara said. Spc. Aponte is married and has three children.

National Guard officials gave details at a noon press conference at their Cranston headquarters, which followed a meeting with many of the families of the men and women in Iraq with the 115th M.P. Company. The company is in Iraq as part of the 220th Military Police Brigade, supporting combat troops performing such missions as house-to-house weapons searches and road patrols.

Flags were lowered to half-staff across southern New England as the news spread of the first casualties in the National Guard unit in 58 years. Its members come from across southeastern Massachusetts, Rhode Island and southeastern Connecticut. In all, 600 members of the Rhode Island National Guard are serving in hot spots overseas—360 of them in Iraq.

Rhode Island's adjutant general and National Guard commanding general Maj. Gen. Reginald Centracchio and Rhode Island Gov. Donald Carcieri were grim-faced as they announced the news.

"All of our hearts are broken over this," Gov. Carcieri said. "Our worst fears have been realized."

Having met with the families anxious for the safety of their relatives in Iraq, Gov. Carcieri said that often "we do not appreciate the sacrifice that these men and women are undergoing."

"This is a terrible reminder that they are in harm's way," he said.

Gen. Centracchio alluded to the changed nature of the conflict and suggested that as well-prepared, trained and led as the troops are, the United States is not fully prepared for the guerrilla war that has evolved in Iraq.

"We're fighting an unconventional war," he said. "We have to devise a way of dealing with a culture that is alien to our set of values."

"Now we're dealing with the unknown," he said. "They'll shake your hand in a friendly way during the day, and at night the same individual is willing to give his life to satisfy his thoughts."

"We have to adapt to the kind of warfare we're dealing with," Gen. Centracchio said.

He said that would involve more training and more access to armored vehicles that could withstand a land mine of the kind his men encountered this week. He remarked that the makeup of the fighting forces has changed in recent years, with reserves constituting more of the primary fighting units.

National Guard units, he said, "are the Army. They are the Air Force."

Lt. Col. McNamara said the "improvised explosive device" that detonated beneath the vehicle could have been remotely controlled by wire or transmitter. The Humvee, which was configured in a "turtle" fashion for use by the military police, was entirely vulnerable to such a threat. It carried its own fuel as well as machine gun and 9 mm pistol ammunition, and was on a routine patrol to keep supply lines open.

The 115th left Rhode Island Feb. 12 for Fort Drum, N.Y., and more training. The 360 men and women arrived in Kuwait April 2 and entered Iraq in early May.

[From the Standard-Times, Sept. 4, 2003]

#### LOSING GUARDSMAN JOSEPH M. CAMARA

The troubling war in Iraq and even more disturbing after-war struck us on the home front this week when an exploding land mine outside Baghdad robbed this world of National Guard Staff Sgt. Joseph M. Camara.

The 40-year-old New Bedford police officer was a bulwark of the South End neighborhood where he lived with his wife, two daughters and son.

He was the essence of a community police officer so desperately needed in this city of rising violence.

Not only did he do his job with distinction during his regular shifts as a city patrol officer, but he gave his family and neighbors on McGurk Street in the South End a profound sense of security.

His solid presence allowed them to sleep easier and take greater pride in their working-class neighborhood of old three-story homes.