

life to aid those who need it most. Wayne Potter of Harlingen was a man who went to great lengths to improve the community.

He took the time to volunteer. Even when his health was failing, he still found the time and energy to keep up with what was so important to him: his mission of volunteering. His life was an example we should all aspire to emulate.

Mr. Potter aided those patients who are mentally ill. He also served as volunteer board member of the Family Crisis Center, the Public Library, the Retired Teachers Association and the Rio Grande Valley Museum.

As a public official he was Harlingen City Commissioner and served a term as Mayor Pro Tem. His presence and his energy in the community have been sorely missed since we lost him last year.

Wayne Potter was a philanthropist for his country, his fellow teachers, neighbors and friends. As a math and science teacher, Mr. Potter ensured children's concerns were not overlooked; he served as a mentor and counselor to them in their time of need. During War World II when his country was in need, he enlisted in the United States Air Force, attaining the rank of Lt. Colonel.

Mr. Potter's service and volunteer efforts are greatly missed in The Rio Grande State Center. Since the center opened its doors, Mr. Potter volunteered his time and served as an officer of the organization. By the time of his passing, he had given 20,000 hours of his personal time to others. Mr. Potter leaves a legacy we all admired; as the Good Book says: "It is better to give than to receive." That's how Wayne Potter lived his life.

Mr. Speaker, the volunteering community of South Texas will honor Mr. Potter's memory and lifetime of service by naming the 55-bed mental health unit at the Rio Grande State Center the "Wayne Potter Memorial Building." His volunteering efforts will now live on through his name on the Center, which was so important to him, and his spirit of generosity.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending the life and service of Mr. Wayne Potter, and in paying tribute to this great example of a man whose efforts and dedication made a difference in his community, with his students, and in the lives of those less fortunate than most of us.

HONORING JASON DEDWYLDER

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, a dedicated member of my staff has moved on to another phase of his career here in Washington DC, but I would like to take a moment to honor his service to my office and to the people of my district in Mississippi.

It was the Summer of 1998 when Jason Dedwylder first joined my team as an intern. Showing hard work, the will to learn and initiative, he came back to my staff in the Fall of 2000 to serve first as a Legislative Correspondent and then my Legislative Assistant. He worked on many issues in my office, but I am especially proud of the work he did in education and health care.

He assisted schools and Head Start centers in my district secure greater funding. He

helped shepherd teachers and principals through the No Child Left Behind reforms. When my constituents called and wrote with questions about our nation's education priorities and how our policies would impact Mississippi, Jason was always ready to discuss their concerns and answer their questions.

Jason worked many hours with me on the Energy and Commerce Committee as we crafted the landmark Medicare Act of 2003 that provided a prescription drug benefit to America's seniors. He was there as we introduced our provisions early in the process that addressed the needs of Mississippi's rural health providers to treat seniors who could otherwise not seek medical care. He was there while we built a self-injectible pilot program to reduce the costs to the Medicare system by expanding choice for seniors with afflictions like arthritis. He was even there that night when we finally passed the Medicare Act. I walked out of the Capitol that morning with Jason as the sun rose on a new day for American seniors.

Quitman—Jason's hometown in Clarke County, Mississippi—should be proud of him. He graduated from Quitman High School and then after earning a Bachelor of Science in Political Science at Mississippi State University, he came to Washington DC and made an impact not only on his family and friends back home, but on Americans across the nation. He learned the intricacies of policy and politics and added to his education a Masters in Public Policy from The George Washington University.

As Jason moves into the private sector, our office will miss his experience, knowledge, and skills, but I know he will continue to work for smart, positive policy that will benefit our nation.

Jason Dedwylder left a formative mark on the shape and operation of my office. We will not forget his good nature and considerate dedication to his work. I thank him for his service to this office and to Mississippi.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO
MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE
RESERVE G.I. BILL

HON. FRANK A. LOBIONDO

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, as the largest mobilization of National Guard and Reserve troops since World War II continues, the high operations tempo is undoubtedly taking a toll on members and their families. Through March of 2004, 363,000 reservists have been mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. This new operations tempo reality for the Reserve components has altered perceptions of what it means to serve as a Reservist or National Guardsman, while raising serious questions about how Reserve members are compensated in terms of benefits. If the nation is to rely on the Reserves to assume a similar role to our active duty troops in military operations, then it is essential that Reserve compensation and benefits adequately reflect that new role.

Congress has become increasingly sensitive to the needs of these servicemembers and

their families and I am heartened that we have improved Reserve component benefits in several areas. Unfortunately, education benefit shortfalls for reservists have not drawn the attention they should, as one benefit that has been left behind is the Reserve Montgomery GI Bill.

When the modern Montgomery GI Bill was established in 1985, Guard and Reserve GI Bill benefits were set at 47 percent of active duty benefits. For every \$100 that an active duty servicemember or veteran received in GI Bill benefits, a Reservist would get \$47. This ratio continued until the late 1990s, when Congress improved the active duty Montgomery GI Bill through large increases. Our active duty servicemembers have more than earned this improved educational benefit, but no similar major increases have been made for the Reserve program.

As a result, Reserve MGIB benefits have slipped to 29 percent of active duty GI Bill benefits. This is simply unacceptable and with over 350,000 Guard and Reserve members having been mobilized in the last 2 years, and many thousands more scheduled for deployment to Afghanistan and Iraq, it is well past time to fix this problem. We must not leave our citizen-soldiers behind as they go into harm's way to fight the Global War on Terrorism. Helping them transition back to civilian life by improving their educational benefits will be one important way we can help.

Today, I am introducing legislation, along with Mr. MCINTYRE of North Carolina, which will increase the Reserve GI Bill to 50 percent of the Montgomery GI Bill over a 5-year period and then keep it linked to the Montgomery GI Bill at the 50 percent rate. This bill, the LoBiondo-McIntyre Reserve GI Bill Improvements Act of 2004, would also authorize Reservists who serve on active duty for 24 months during a 5-year period to qualify for benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill program, which is now open to only active duty personnel. This is a fiscally responsible way to make an achievable increase in educational benefits for the Reserve component.

The 253rd Transportation Company out of Cape May Court House, New Jersey, in my district has just returned from over a year in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. We are very proud of the 253rd and the great contributions they have made to the Global War on Terrorism. I dedicate this legislation to all the National Guardsmen and Reservists from the Second District of New Jersey and to the thousands of other Reserve component soldiers, sailors, airman, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen who secure our freedom through their dedicated service to our nation.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

FREEDOM FOR PEDRO ARGÜELLES
MORÁN

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker I rise today to speak about Pedro Argüelles Morán, a prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Argüelles Morán is a member of the Cooperative of Independent Journalists and the