

Intergovernmental Relations and the Census. Upon my appointment to the House Rules Committee, I was required to relinquish my chairmanship, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Full Committee Chairman TOM DAVIS and the staff for their tremendous efforts.

In the 108th Congress, the Subcommittee held 39 hearings—substantive hearings—on issues ranging from the threats of cyber terrorism, to the President's Management Agenda, to Geospatial issues and to planning for the 2010 Census. During this time, I believe that we have put America on alert—in government, the private sector and home computer use—to the threats posed by cyber criminals and how best to protect our resources.

Much of the success that we enjoyed on the subcommittee is due to the hard work and expertise of the staff, which took a citrus farmer from Central Florida and brought him up to speed on the intricacies of new technologies and their importance to all Americans. My able Staff Director, Bob Dix, led a truly outstanding team of individuals who worked tirelessly to conduct thorough oversight of the areas of jurisdiction of my subcommittee. They deserve much of the credit for the positive impact that we have made.

Lastly, I would like to thank Chairman TOM DAVIS for the trust he placed in me. As my predecessor on the Technology Subcommittee, he left great shoes to fill. I appreciate his guidance and friendship, and I pledge to continue working on these issues of importance in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT RYAN
CASPER

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the good works of first Lieutenant Ryan Casper, who has served both his country and the Iraq community in an astounding manner. Lt. Casper, an Army Reservist serving in the 477th Ambulance Company, has demonstrated unyielding dedication to improving the dire situation thousands of Iraqi students are experiencing.

Lt. Casper, a history teacher from Ellsworth High School, has extended his passion for education from his classroom in Wisconsin into the Iraq community. He has been instrumental in meeting the needs of the students by restoring educational structures in Iraq. The deteriorating infrastructure of the education facilities and the absence of essential school supplies generated Lt. Casper's inspiration to create a charity that ministered to the needs of school-aged children. Lt. Casper understands that a sanitary and well-equipped facility is necessary before a quality education can be achieved.

As an active member of the military for twenty years, Lt. Casper is executive officer of a ground ambulance company that transports patients and medical supplies from Baghdad to Southern Iraq. Casper's charity, the 477th Hearts and Minds Club, has provided numerous children with school supplies. Lt. Casper's operation was made successful by the donations he received from citizens in the United

States. The largest contributor to his cause were Ellsworth High School students who collected over a thousand items to be used by students in Iraq. The supplies donated to the Hearts and Minds Club were delivered to various schools during ambulance runs performed by Lt. Casper's unit.

Lt. Casper's actions were successful in furnishing Iraqi schools with essential supplies, but more importantly, his actions altered the mindset of students in Iraq. The poor perception of American soldiers by Iraqi children wavered with the arrival of new materials. The once feared soldier was transformed into a heroic character overnight.

In October of 2003, and September of 2004, to personally lend my support to the troops engaged in this war, I had the great privilege of visiting Iraq. I met with troops and received a first-hand assessment of the reconstruction activities. After witnessing the poor conditions facing many citizens of Iraq, I felt great inspiration that one of my constituents had demonstrated such steadfast leadership in serving both his country and the citizens of Iraq. I would like to congratulate and thank Lt. Ryan Casper for his perseverance and unselfish desire to improve the world around him. Lt. Casper once said, "A goodwill gesture can go a long way in this country and hopefully we can supply that gesture."

MARRIAGE PROTECTION
AMENDMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 2004

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 106 offered by Representative Marilyn Musgrave.

The resolution, if passed by two-thirds of both the House and the Senate, and if ratified by three-fourths of the state legislatures, would amend the United States Constitution with the following language:

"Marriage in the United States shall consist solely of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor the constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman."

This nation once again finds itself wrestling with monumental social questions of family. The way in which we choose to answer these questions will have far-reaching consequences upon ourselves and our descendants.

Throughout recorded history, civilizations have existed and perpetuated themselves with basic principles of social structure. Some cultures have emphasized different principles such as community responsibility while others have emphasized individual responsibility. But all civil peoples have survived and prospered only where raising children was ideally the responsibility of their mother and father.

Over the past century we have seen many changes in American culture. We have witnessed an explosion of new travel opportunities, access to information and advances in medicine. Certainly social norms have shifted. We have made progress, in the truest sense, such as recognizing the fundamental human

rights of all people no matter their color or creed. And we have also made egregious regressions such as legalizing the aborting of unborn children. Even in this advanced age, we must continue to wage battles against injustices.

But with all the change the United States has undergone and will continue to undergo—there will always remain the goal to ensure that our children are able to perpetuate life and all things good. Any changes we allow to happen and support through legislation that affects this goal should be scrupulously considered.

The resolution before the House today seeks to articulate what constitutes a marriage—not because we have some new definition, but because a small number of judicial activists and social re-engineers are seeking to impose a new definition and experiment with the structure in which children are encouraged to be raised. If we do nothing and allow the courts to re-define marriage, State and Federal governments will soon have little or no authority to ultimately restrain any imaginable form of marital contract between couples and groups of people and even animals.

It is no secret marriage has been under assault in recent decades. With rising occurrences of extra-marital affairs, divorce, spousal abuse and teenage mothers becoming more commonplace among our population, many wonder why marriage is worth preserving at all. But just because the institution of marriage has experienced turbulent times is no reason to give up on it as the ideal for which we should strive.

I want to emphasize that millions of single moms and dads across this country are struggling to do what is right for their children. They love their children and want them to do well and succeed and someday have an opportunity to have a healthy family of their own. As we debate how to best help sustain the institution of marriage, we should acknowledge that these parents are doing a terrific job raising their children to the best of their ability. They should be commended, especially the single moms who probably have the toughest job in America.

While recognizing the honorable single moms and dads, we should also work to help reduce the number instances where children grow up in homes without both their mother and father as a part of the family.

As a representative to the United States Congress on behalf of the people from the Fourth Congressional District of Kansas, I took an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States. The preamble to that great document states that two of the Constitution's purposes are to "promote the general Welfare" and "secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." I consider how we raise our children and with whom that responsibility lies to be among the most crucial decisions we face in promoting the general well-being of all Americans and our descendants.

As the government seeks to provide for the general welfare of its citizens, I believe it should promote that which provides the maximum protection for our youngest generation. A child is best nurtured and protected when both the mother and father are sharing the responsibility of raising the child.