

to attack it or raise issues by it. "Tax" maybe is the wrong term. Then they are going to fill the tree so no amendments can be made. Then they are going to have the final vote with motions to concur with the House message. It is obvious they have the votes to do this. This bill has so much in it for so many different little folks and issues around here that they have racked up the vote count to the point where they can accomplish it. Well over 60 votes would be for this bill. The votes are there. They can do it. That is the way the majority works.

But we have to ask this question. The American people took the reins of government away from the Republican Party, the Republican Congress, in this last election. They did so in large part because they were tired of our hypocrisy as a party on the issue of fiscal responsibility. It would appear their concerns are justified. It is true that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will probably be worse at fiscal management than we are. We have shown it to be in our nature to spend money. If you add up all the things they talk about in their campaigns, they will spend a lot, but at least they will not be hypocritical, going to the American people and saying: We are the party of fiscal responsibility.

We have to ask how we as a party got to this point where we have a leadership which is going to ram down the throats of our party the biggest budget buster in the history of the Congress under Republican leadership.

Anyway, the American people figured it out. I am sorry we haven't figured it out yet.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized for 15 minutes.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

FIRST SERGEANT CHARLES M. KING

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated and decorated Ohio soldier, Army 1SG Charles Monroe King from Cleveland. 1SG King was killed in Iraq by a roadside bomb on October 14, 2006, during a convoy mission to send supplies to Baghdad. He was 48 years old at the time of his death.

1SG King's last mission captures the essential character and selflessness of this man. A 19-year veteran of the Army, Charles was the senior officer on a resupply mission near Baghdad. According to others, Charles did not have to accompany the convoy, but, true to form, Charles went to offer his experience to the younger soldiers on the mission.

His friend and fellow soldier, Captain Jon Schaeffer, said this about what happened:

He did not have to go on that resupply mission, but Sergeant King loved his soldiers. He would not let them do anything that he would not do, so he was right there with them.

His heartbroken fiancée, Dana Canedy, added:

He said he could not, in good faith, send his soldiers on a mission unless he did it himself. He made sure that each one of his soldiers took leave before he would take his leave.

That selflessness—that willingness to always put his men first—is a measure of Charles' leadership and courage. That Saturday in October, America lost a true hero.

A career soldier, Charles was scheduled to return home last month. He was a member of a unit from Fort Hood, TX, that was deployed to Iraq last November. As a veteran of the first Gulf War and one of the Army's very best soldiers, Charles was highly decorated. His numerous awards include the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, and the Army Valorous Unit Award. This list of awards, impressive as it is, tells only part of the story of this remarkable man.

As his sister Gail said, "My brother was very humble about his military experience and all the things he had accomplished." Charles was born and raised in the Cleveland neighborhood of Lee-Miles, where his parents Charlie and Gladys still live.

Friends and family remember Charles as a soft-spoken, helpful little boy, who could be counted on to do more than his share of the work.

His former church Pastor, Vern Miller, recalled the day he asked for volunteers to build a three-foot concrete block wall for a needy neighbor. Charles was only a child, but he already had that natural impulse to help and to serve. Pastor Miller said that "Chuckie was the first to arrive. He was ready to work. Of course, he was too little to carry the heavy blocks, but he brought the workers water all day." In that giving little boy, we can see clearly the loving man he would become.

Charles was also a person with wide-ranging interests and passions. He was especially interested in art. When Charles was about 13, his mother enrolled him and his sister in an art class at a nearby community college. Gail said that, while she "failed miserably," Charles fell in love with art.

Upon finishing high school, Charles attended the heralded Art Institute of Chicago. Upon graduation in 1983, he worked as a fashion ad illustrator in Alabama. Known as a hard worker with a meticulous eye for detail, Charles created illustrations for advertisements, as well as for news stories.

His artistic talent continued to play a significant role in Charles' life long after he traded in a civilian career in art for a life of military service. While serving in the military, Charles became fascinated with the history of the 761st Tank Battalion, an African American unit that served in World War II. Ultimately Charles was so inspired that he drew a collection of illustra-

tions of the unit in battle. His collection was put on display at the Pentagon in 1998, as part of the Black History Month celebration. More of his work is now on exhibit at military museums at Fort Lewis, WA, and Fort Knox, TN.

Charles King could have lived comfortably as a professional artist, but his strong sense of duty led him to enlist in the Army. "My brother was very much into service and serving others, and that was the driving force [for joining the military]," Gail said.

Charles joined the Army in 1987 and married shortly after. He soon became a dad, when daughter Christina was born. She was the light of her father's life.

While in the military, Charles served honorably in Iraq from 1990 to 1991, as part of Operation Desert Storm. Later, he was able to continue his education, attending Cuyahoga Community College and receiving an associates degree from Chamberlain Junior College in Boston.

Charles was remembered by his fellow soldiers as the consummate professional. Captain Schaeffer remembers how the normally soft spoken and gentle man was also a very capable leader, able to guide his troops in times of chaos. He said that "we all learned one thing: When Sergeant King yelled, you moved. He only yelled when there was good reason."

Before his last deployment to Iraq, Charles became engaged to Dana Canedy, a Pulitzer-prize winning journalist who worked for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and now serves as an editor at the New York Times. While Charles was in Iraq this last year, Dana gave birth to their son, Jordan. Charles was ecstatic.

During a 2 week leave in September, he got to see his 6 month-old son for what would, tragically, be the first and the last time. He could hardly put his baby boy down.

Although it was terribly difficult to be separated from his family, Charles came up with a unique and heartwarming way to communicate to his infant son Jordan. Miles away, Charles began keeping a journal addressed to Jordan. The journal, which reached 200 pages, was a collection of everything from short stories from his childhood to excerpts of his time as an artist. Mostly though, the journal laid out detailed guidelines and fatherly advice about what Jordan would need to know growing up.

Dana said this about that journal:

It was therapy for [Charles]. He wanted his son to know everything he could tell him. Everything from his favorite Bible verses, why he wanted to have a baby, why he wanted to be a soldier, and how to treat women.

Leafing through the pages, there are instructions for everything from how to deal with disappointment to letting his son know it was OK for boys to cry. As Dana said, "Charles was this big, muscular guy, but he was like a big pussycat." Charles ended his journal to

his young son, saying, "I will do my best to make you and your mother proud."

Indeed, Charles King made everyone who had the privilege to know him very proud.

News of Charles' death was devastating to his family, friends, and community. Since his death, phone calls have poured in to his family's home. "God is just continuing to work miracles in our lives," said Gail.

In a funeral service held in Cleveland at Lee Heights Community Church on October 23, friends eulogized Charles. They told stories about him that prompted a sea of smiles and nods from the friends and family packed into the tiny church, whose walls were covered with Charles' paintings.

Those in attendance remembered the boy who had grown up to be such an accomplished man. They remembered the brave soldier, the talented artist, and the loving son, brother, father, and friend. They remembered an American hero.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep all of Charles' family—his parents Gladys and Charlie, his sister Gail, his fiancée Dana, his son Jordan, and his daughter Christina—in our thoughts and in our prayers.

LANCE CORPORAL THOMAS KEELING

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Marine LCpl Thomas Keeling from Strongsville, OH. LCpl Keeling was killed on June 9, 2005, in an explosion in Iraq. He was assigned to the Marine Reserve's 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, 4th Marine Division based out of Akron, OH. He was 29 years old.

LCpl Keeling leaves his mother and step-father, Sharon and Robert Berry, his father Tom Keeling; his sister Erin Keeling, and his twin sister Kristen Keeling.

Thomas—Tom to his family and friends—graduated from Strongsville High School in 2000 and then attended Kent State University, graduating in 2004 with a Criminal Justice degree. Matthew Kichinka from Strongsville knew Tom as "Tommy Boy." He reminisced about his high school friend:

I still remember the first time we met in home room 10th grade year. You were my best friend in high school. I will never forget the great times we've shared, the mischief we caused in gym class, and the nights we closed at the kitchen at Giant Eagle. Thank you friend, for being there for me during those difficult times in high school and being the best friend a person could have.

Dave Murphy of Middleburg Heights, OH, moved to Strongsville not knowing a soul—that is until he met Tom. As Dave put it:

I moved to Strongsville when I was young. I was concerned I wouldn't find any friends, I was blessed enough to move in across the street from the Keelings. Before the moving trucks even drove away, Tom was in my yard inviting me into his. This is a perfect example of the person Tom was. He was truly compassionate for others and a great friend.

Mary Jo Webster from Berea, OH, was Tom's 6th grade teacher. She remembers him as "a lively, happy child." Friends knew him as always having fun and doing things he enjoyed. Whether he was playing hockey in Parma Heights, in his softball league, or shooting hoops with friends in his neighborhood, he was always active. Teammates took pride in their skillful forward. He had outstanding agility and tremendous speed. But his interests were not just in the sports that he was playing, he was interested in the people and the relationships it takes to build a team.

When Tom was at Kent State, he worked in housekeeping to earn extra money. Paula Hill described her custodial co-worker by saying that "he was one of the nicest young gentlemen I've ever met. I called him my number three son because he was as close to me as my own children."

When Tom graduated from college, he was considering a career in the FBI. His mother Sharon said that "Tom's dream was to become an FBI agent, and he chose going to the Marine Corps because he thought he would get some experience that would help him along his career."

Tom had been a Reservist for 4 years, and his stepfather and grandfather were both marines. He looked up to his grandfather, who was a World War II veteran and had been awarded two Purple Hearts. When Tom died, he was buried next to him.

Tom once told his stepfather that he was proud of the job that the U.S. troops were doing in Iraq and that he could see things improving. Tom had been in Iraq since February 2005, and was assigned to a mobile strike force seeking insurgents in the Anbar province near the Syrian border. "Sometimes they go out seven days at a time. They'd patrol cities during the day and go out in the desert at night," his stepfather said.

But Tom's work in Iraq didn't stop on the field of battle. In weekly care packages, his family made sure to send him candy and Beanie Babies to hand out to Iraqi children. Tom's ability to connect with the children of the country he was trying to protect was a testament to the kind, gentle soul that Tom Keeling was.

Nate Ickes from Akron, OH, honored his brother-in-arms by saying:

I was honored to have served with Tom. He brought joy and laughter to everyone in our unit. There was never a day that went by that he did not have a smile on his face.

Close friends, like Emily Laurie of Charleston, SC, understand the impact Tom had on the people he touched. She wrote words of comfort in a posting on an Internet tribute website. This is what she wrote:

Remember Tom with a smile. Remember the good things, the good times, and the laughter. He is a hero, endowed with great courage and strength and has sacrificed his life for the freedom of others. He will be missed, but not forgotten.

Close family friend Mark Nutter from Brunswick, OH, also paid tribute to Tom's memory in an online website by saying the following:

I just wanted to say thank you for letting me be a part of your family for a few years. I got the chance to know the man that later became the closest thing I have ever had to a little brother. Tom not only quickly became my friend. He became my family. He became my brother. Tom was one of the greatest people that I will ever know and have ever known in my whole life. I will miss him dearly.

Mark went on to write:

I am posting this because I came through on a small promise I made to Tom when he passed away. Tom played softball with my friends and me for a few years. The friends Tommy made on the team, including me, made a promise to win our league championship for him.

Well Tom, we did it, and we did it for you. I had your old jersey hanging proudly in our dugout all year for you and as long as we play, we always will. I had a picture of Tom and a simple quote below him before our championship games. It read, 'Win 2 for Tommy.' Tom, we won two for you that night and our first league title.

I will miss Tom dearly and hope his family knows what he meant to me. Thanks for the good times. They will always be in my heart. Thank you, again, Tom. It was a pleasure to have known you.

Marine LCpl Thomas Keeling had a zest for life, a love of family and friends, and a deep understanding of what it means to serve. My wife Fran and I continue to keep his family and friends in our thoughts and prayers.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD PUMMILL

Mr. President, I rise to honor a courageous Ohioan from Cincinnati—Marine SSgt Richard Pummill, who was killed in Iraq by a roadside bomb on October 20, 2005, after serving there for 3 months as a weapons officer. He was 27 years of age at the time.

Staff Sergeant Pummill leaves his wife, Chantal; their son Donald Richard—known as Cliff—his mother Lynn, and his grandparents Donald and Ann.

Richard—known as Rick—graduated from Anderson High School in 1996, where he excelled in football and wrestling. Eileen Arnold, a counselor at Anderson High School, first met Rick when he was a freshman. "He stood out in my mind because he was fun-loving, outgoing, and energetic," she recalled. "I had the sense he wanted to do something special with his life. He was never afraid to speak his mind and was never hesitant. He didn't go along just to go along."

Indeed, Rick did want to do something special with his life, and he joined the Marine Corps immediately after high school. Patsy Hager, mother of Rick's childhood friend Wally, said:

The Marines gave him a purpose. He was always driven. He was always about something.

This passion and drive served Rick well in his Marine Corps weapons officer training. As Rick's friend Matt Fugate recalled: