not have to pay for the contamination of the water supplies that they caused, nor will they have to pay to acquire new water sources for hundreds of thousands of customers.

Nullify pending litigation against MTBE producers, leaving hundreds of thousands of people without recourse—There are currently 130 communities and water suppliers across the nation that have litigation pending to reclaim damages for MTBE pollution of public drinking water sources. Because this bill is retroactive, taking effect for lawsuits pending on September 5, 2003, all of these lawsuits would be nullified.

The MTBE provisions contained in the Energy Policy Act of 2003 benefit the wrongdoers and have a number of harmful consequences for the victims of drinking water contamination. Any policy that has the effect of leaving hundreds of thousands of victims without any recourse against their wrongdoers is bad policy.

NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH

HON. DOUG OSE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Diabetes Caucus, I rise today in honor of National Diabetes Month. Diabetes is a growing concern in this country as each year increasing numbers of Americans are being diagnosed with the disease. The disease does not discriminate; children, adults and senior citizens alike are realizing the devastating impact of diabetes and its tragic effects have touched the lives of Americans across the country.

Diabetes itself is debilitating, but it can also lead to heart, kidney, nervous system or dental diseases, as well as blindness, high blood pressure, complications during pregnancy, strokes, and even death. Today, 17 million people live with diabetes and approximately 1 million new cases are diagnosed each year in people over the age of 20. It is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, with 19 percent of Americans over the age of 25 losing their lives to diabetes each year. The statistic that 1 million children have been diagnosed with juvenile diabetes is particularly unnerving.

In my home state of California, every half-hour a life is lost due to causes directly or indirectly linked to diabetes. Currently, there are two million Californians who have been diagnosed with diabetes, putting California's average above the national rate. That number is expected to double by the year 2020.

Organizations such as the Juvenile Research Fund are vital to research efforts to find a cure for diabetes. In addition to conducting its own research, JDRF provides valuable outreach programs in schools and the community to educate the public on diabetes related issues.

This past June, the Sacramento chapter of JDRF sent two of my constituents, Juleah Cordi and Gianna Gallo, to the Children's Congress. At this conference, children afflicted with diabetes spoke with Members of Congress to raise awareness of this debilitating disease. As a congressional co-chair of this event, I would like to thank Juleah, Gianna and other Children's Congress participants for their help in bringing attention to this issue.

The cost of diabetes is rising, both in terms of the cost to treat the disease and the number of American lives lost resulting from complications relating to the disease. We must support the National Institute of Health's funding for diabetes research so that organizations like JDRF may continue to provide preventative education and help curb the spread of the disease. Education is a key component in preventative efforts, by encouraging individuals to make life-style changes that will reduce their risk of getting diabetes.

Mr. Speaker, we have made great strides over the years in diabetes research and outreach education. I applaud the many organizations that have contributed to this effort and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring National Diabetes Month. Let's help give those Americans living with diabetes hope that one day soon, we will find a cure to diabetes.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RICHARD WREN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I pay tribute today to Police Captain Richard Wren of La Junta, Colorado. Recently, Richard was honored by the La Junta City Council for two decades of honorable service. Richard has dedicated his life to serving and protecting the citizens of Colorado and it is my honor to call his many contributions to the attention of this body of Congress here today.

Richard was born in Denver, Colorado and moved to La Junta to attend Otero Junior College in 1980. Upon graduation, Richard attended the Law Enforcement Academy in Trinidad and in 1983 he became a patrolman for the La Junta Police Department. He rose quickly through the ranks to achieve his status as Captain.

Richard has achieved a great deal in his tenure with the La Junta Police Department. Richard is an expert in canine police work. During his career, he established the La Junta canine program and attended two national competitions for the United States Police Canine Association. In 2002, Richard furthered his law enforcement education by attending the National Federal Bureau of Investigation's Academy in Quantico, Virginia. In addition, Richard is an expert in firearms and patrol procedures, and he holds teaching certificates in both of those disciplines.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise and pay tribute to Captain Richard Wren before this body of Congress and this nation. Richard has managed to balance his tireless dedication to the citizens of La Junta, while gladly serving as a loving father and husband as well. The Citizens of La Junta Colorado are safer as the result of Richard's tireless dedication to their well-being and it is my honor to join them in thanking him for his service.

H.R. 1588, DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, when this House voted on H.R. 1588 in May, I voted against it. I didn't think the bill as it stood then was one I could endorse. The conference report that we are considering today is marginally better. Although I still have strong reservations, I will support the conference report.

We are 2 years into our war on terrorism and still engaged in military action in Iraq. There is no doubt that we must continue to focus on defending our homeland against terrorism, we must support our military personnel, and we must give our military the training, equipment, and weapons it needs to beat terrorism around the world.

That's why I'm in favor of provisions in the bill that support those men and women who have put their lives on the line in Afghanistan and Iraq. The bill provides an average 4.15 percent pay raise for service members, boosts military special pay and extends bonuses, and funds programs to improve living and working facilities on military installations.

I am pleased that the report includes provisions recognizing the importance of non-citizen soldiers and the many sacrifices and contributions they have made. The report eases the naturalization process for these soldiers and their families, reducing to one year the length of service requirement for naturalization during peacetime; allowing soldiers to apply and take oaths for citizenship overseas; and granting permanent resident status to the surviving family of U.S. citizen soldiers who are granted posthumous citizenship as a result of death incurred in combat.

I'm also pleased that this bill will allow approximately one-third of eligible disabled military retirees to receive both their retirement and disability benefits. I would have preferred that the bill extend this ''concurrent receipt'' to all disabled retirees, but this is a great improvement on the bill the House considered earlier this year—which included no such provisions. I am also pleased that the bill extends the military's TRICARE health coverage to National Guard and reservists and their families if servicemembers have been called to active duty. These are all necessary and important provisions that I support.

I do have a number of serious reservations about the bill.

I don't believe it addresses 21st century threats as well as it could. With the exception of the Crusader artillery system, the Administration and Congress have continued every major weapons system inherited from previous administrations. So although the bill brings overall defense spending to levels 13 percent higher than the average Cold War levels, it doesn't present a coherent vision of how to realign our defense priorities.

The bill still includes provisions that would exempt the Department of Defense from compliance with some requirements under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). There is broad-based support for existing environmental laws—as there should be—and these laws already allow case-by-case flexibility to

protect national security. The Pentagon has never sought to take advantage of this flexibility, so it strains belief that these laws are undermining our national security. Indeed, the General Accounting Office has found that training readiness remains high at military installations notwithstanding our environmental laws. I am not persuaded that the changes to these acts proposed by the military are justified.

The bill still includes worrisome provisions to overhaul DOD's personnel system. Although they are improved from the bill the House considered earlier this year, these provisions would still strip DOD's civilian employees of worker rights relating to due process, appeals, and collective bargaining.

Most disturbingly, the bill still includes provisions on nuclear weapons development. This bill provides funding to study the feasibility of developing nuclear earth-penetrating weapons and authorizes previously prohibited research on low-yield nuclear weapons. Low-yield nuclear weapons have an explosive yield of five kilotons or less—''only'' a third of the explosive yield of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Our obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) require the United States to work towards nuclear disarmament, rather than further increase the size and diversity of our arsenal. By continuing the development of new U.S. nuclear weapons at the same time that we are trying to convince other nations to forego obtaining such weapons, we undermine our credibility in the fight to stop nuclear proliferation.

Mr. Speaker, I am very disappointed that this conference report rolls back civil service protections, environmental protections, and our work in the area of nuclear nonproliferation. But some of these provisions were improved in conference, and the addition of concurrent receipt provisions for our nation's veterans is critical. In view of these changes to the bill, added to my belief in the importance of supporting our men and women in uniform, I will support the conference report today.

TRIBUTE TO SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY, SAGINAW, MICHIGAN

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Saginaw Valley State University in celebration of its 40th Anniversary.

Founded in 1963, Saginaw Valley State University has quickly become one of the fastest-growing universities in Michigan. The university's humble beginnings as a community college in the late 1950s have encouraged the rapid growth and expansion of the university as demonstrated by their recent additions. From holding early classes in the basement of Delta College, to its current situation on a 782-acre campus, Saginaw Valley State University has become an unrivaled success story in mid-Michigan.

I am honored today to recognize Saginaw Valley State University for its many accomplishments, and to thank the many staff, faculty, students, and families who have endeavored to support Saginaw Valley State University.

VETERANS MEMORIAL AT THE KOOTENAI COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

HON. C.L. ''BUTCH'' OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of the House the creation of a Veterans Memorial at the Kootenai County Administration Building in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Former commissioner Ron Rankin has spearheaded the effort to pay tribute to Kootenai County's brave veterans with memorials honoring their sacrifice.

The first phase of the Veterans Memorial, dedicated on Veterans Day 1998, is a striking seven-by-five-foot, 8,000-pound black granite monument naming Kootenai County veterans killed in action from the Spanish American War through the Vietnam War. Their names are etched in large gold letters followed by their branch of service, and the war in which they served. ''In God We Trust'' is etched above all the names in three-inch gold letters. The monument is strategically placed at the main entrance of the new administration building to remind visitors of the heroes who gave their lives for our freedom.

On Memorial Day 1999, the county dedicated 13 unique murals for the outside of the new courthouse. The 39-by-42-inch granite plaques depict historically significant military events in the 20th century. They are reproductions of photographs and paintings that were laser-etched in color on polished granite slabs. The first two were completed at a cost of $2,000 each while the remaining 11 will have been added at a cost of $3,000 each. The scenes include: Pearl Harbor, the Bataan Death March, the Battle of Midway, the flag raising on Iwo Jima, Army rangers climbing a 100-foot Normandy cliff on ''D'' Day, troops assaulting the beach at Normandy, gun ships off the coast of Vietnam, and ''Dust Off' helicopters retrieving the wounded in Vietnam. When the entire project is completed, there will be pamphlets in the foyer of the new administration building describing each scene in detail. The foyer already includes interesting information, photos and paintings of our heroic armed forces from battle scenes of 20th century wars.

A Purple Heart Honor Roll now is in place in the courthouse foyer, and a wall of gold-framed certificates of veterans who were awarded medals of valor will complete the project. The display was dedicated at a ceremony on November 10, 2003. The event's keynote speaker was Idaho Supreme Court Justice Daniel Eismann, who earned two Purple Hearts and three Air Medals during the Vietnam War. I would like to submit the speech Justice Eismann delivered at the dedication for the RECORD.

HALL OF HEROES DEDICATION—KOOTENAI COUNTY

(Hon. Daniel T. Eismann, Nov. 10, 2003)

I first want to commend the citizens of Kootenai County for this impressive memorial to those who have served in the United States military. As a veteran, I thank you. I also commend Ron Rankin, who was the driving force behind this growing monument.

The words ''Keeping America Free'' on the murals outside summarize the primary mission of the United States military. The freedom we enjoy today did not come cheaply. It was purchased during the Revolutionary War with the blood of American soldiers; for over two hundred years it has been guarded and defended both here and abroad by the blood of American soldiers; and it will be preserved in the future by the blood of American soldiers. In the words of Daniel Webster, ''God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard it and defend it.''

It is because of our God-given freedom that we are the most prosperous and powerful nation on earth. It is the desire for that freedom that causes many from other countries to flock to our borders. It is envy of that freedom, and the prosperity and power it produces, that causes others to hate and want to destroy us.

With oceans to our east and west and good neighbors to our north and south, we have for many years felt secure in our freedom. We may even have taken it for granted. No nation on earth could be powerful enough to invade us. The tragic events of September 11, 2001, however, shattered that security. Although the enemies of freedom cannot take ours by force, they showed that they will try to destroy it by fear. Those tragic events confirmed that to preserve our freedom here, we will sometimes have to root out evil and tyranny in other parts of the world. We cannot be truly free unless people around the world are free. The enemies of freedom will always desire to extinguish the beacons of liberty shining around the world, and ours shines the brightest. The tragic events of September 11th also rekindled a deep appreciation and respect for those who have donned the uniform of the United States military.

We are here today to honor some of those who have helped to preserve our freedom. We have come together to dedicate the Hall of Heroes, to honor those from Kootenai County who have been awarded a medal for heroism while serving in our nation's military. By honoring them, we are not in any way minimizing the sacrifice and contribution of all others who have served in uniform. Any of you who saw the movie ''We Were Soldiers'' may remember the helicopter pilot in the movie whose nickname was ''Too Tall.'' The real ''Too Tall'' is a friend of mine named Ed Freeman who lives in Boise. The movie does not do justice to what Ed actually did during that battle.

On November 14, 1965, after LZ X–Ray had been closed to helicopters because of intense enemy fire, Ed flew fourteen missions into and out of that landing zone delivering ammunition, water, and medical supplies to the troops on the ground and evacuating 30 seriously wounded soldiers. For his actions, Ed was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, our nation's highest award for heroism. Ed's Medal of Honor was certainly well-deserved, but he could not have made the impact he did without the help of others. He could not have delivered the much-needed ammunition, water, and medical supplies to the men on the ground unless others had worked to have those items waiting at his base to be loaded on his helicopter. Few if any of the seriously wounded soldiers that he rescued would have survived had it not been for the medical personnel who were waiting to care for them.

The military is a team, with every person doing his or her part. Those of us who served in combat would not have lasted long without others who kept us supplied with needed materiel—weapons, munitions; equipment, fuel, medical supplies, and food—or who equipped and directed the planes, artillery, and ships that rained bombs, missiles, and shells on the enemy. Thus, by honoring those who have been awarded medals for heroism