



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

## *House of Representatives*

### TRIBUTE TO UNITED STATES MARINE MAJOR ERIC BURKETT HON. MIKE KELLY OF PENNSYLVANIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of one of my constituents, United States Marine Major Eric Burkett, from New Castle, Pennsylvania.

Major Burkett was deployed as a member of the 24th Expeditionary Force in Morocco as an Osprey pilot. On April 11, 2012, he was nearly killed in a plane crash, which took the lives of two of his brothers-in-arms.

After coming home to Walter Reed, he lost one of his legs and continues to recover from his numerous injuries to this day. His wife, Melissa, who also is a former marine, has been by his side from day 1, along with their loving six children.

Major Burkett may never fly again, but already with his recovery he soars high above most of us. It was his spirit of service and patriotism that led him to start a program at Fort Belvoir for adaptive archery for his fellow wounded warriors.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the Record a poem penned by Albert Carey Caswell in his honor and in celebration of his new adaptive home, built thanks to the Gary Sinise Foundation. It is people like Major Burkett, whom we celebrate. It is the people who put themselves in danger and harm's way in order to protect the rest of us. I am so proud and humble today to be able to submit this poem in honor of Major Burkett.

#### **OSPREY DE CORPS**

*(By Albert Carey Caswell)*

Osprey...  
Osprey De Corps...  
What a magnificent presence oh for sure...  
And oh what a Osprey De Force...  
As straight as an arrow heading for...  
Truer than true into that face of war...  
To serve and protect...  
His Country Tis of Thee he'll not neglect...

To reek havoc upon the enemy a shear TRAIN  
WRECK...  
All in those magnificent shades of green...  
Such Strength In Honor seen...  
Soaring to new his courage convenes...  
With such impact this United States Marine.  
Oh to be a United States Marine...  
Who in Strength In Honor are seen...

Soaring to new heights to intervene...  
To fight the fight...  
What a Osprey De Force awesome sight...  
Who for all us out on his course took flight...  
Marines with wings,  
one of the most impressive of all things...  
A sheer work of art this human being...  
Swooping down upon the enemy for the Nation he so  
loves...  
A bulls eye,  
hitting his mark all in his battle cry...  
To vanquish an enemy straight into the heart of he flies...  
Going from vertical to horizontal as he  
will not be denied...  
In and out of places others dare not to try...  
Making those boots on the ground realize...  
That he's got their backs up on high...  
Who bleeds Marine green all the time...  
And loves Marines so much he married a Marine this  
guy...  
One of the badest of the bad upon which this Nation  
relies...  
Who leads with his heart as he sets  
his sights on high...  
Finding his mark...  
An Osprey De Corps all in his part...  
Oh what a force...  
All out on his most heroic course...  
A United States Marine burning bright,  
this force...  
When, out on a mission crashed as death was at his  
side...  
As his two brothers,  
angels now up to Heaven would rise...  
Coming back home with only his family upon which to  
rely...  
So all by his side...  
His fine wife Melissa and children giving him the  
strength to try...  
As he knew it was time...  
Time to rebuild his life...  
Armed with his heart of the strength and iron will...  
Giving him the power and courage to nourish him to  
instill...  
The strength to rebuild...

Who against all odds our wounded warriors into that  
dark night move onward still...  
As he won the battle but lose his leg...  
Realizing he'd never fly again on that day...  
When, he looked at his target and then his options  
weighted...  
So setting his sights high out on his way...  
A Osprey De Corps on his way to recovery with tear in  
eye seemed as he prayed...  
Bulls eye hitting the mark...  
As soon he was up and out the door...  
Leaving behind a town called pity for sure...  
When, to new heights his heart so soared...  
To Teach Us...  
To Reach Us...  
To Beseech Us All The More...  
Creating his own Hunger Games,  
with his great appetite for recovery he hungered for...  
And the last time I saw Major Burkett,  
I had to look up...  
Because, with his fine heart way above me he so soars..  
His wife Melissa he married up for sure...  
With four beautiful children he's thinks he is the luckiest  
guy and can't ask for  
more...  
Because, the families are the unsung heroes whenever  
Johnny goes off to war...  
Who are the ones who must wait and worry all the  
more...  
And when they come home give them such comfort for  
their recovery to insure...  
And where would all these heroes be if it were not but  
for all of these?  
The families are our unsung heroes each day our Lord so  
sees...  
Leading the way to recovery...  
Major Burkett all in those shades of green...  
Is one magnificent Osprey De Force seen...  
The pride of Pennsylvania for what he's done and where  
he's been...  
Its courageous men like him of to war our Nation  
sends...  
Who help win all those wars upon whom we depend...  
For all that we hold sacred and so love and adore...  
A one fine Osprey De Corps...  
Ooo Rah!



Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress

3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District, Pennsylvania