

Mr. President,

I attended the Greater Sierra Vista United Veterans Council as the Warrant Officer Associations representative.

I am pleased to report the Memorial Day organization is on track. The Southern Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery invites organizations, families and friends to the Annual Memorial Day Observance, on Monday, May 26, 2008, from 1830 to 1930. This years event is hosted by the Wild West Detachment, Marine Corps League, Tombstone, AZ. They would like our official representative and one uniformed member to carry our organization's colors as part of the observance program. No other obstacles for discussion were presented.

Also, the Historic Soldiers Relocation Project is under way and donations for the first order for paver memorials need to be submitted. I submit our Warrant Officer Association should participate in the first buy. Please contact Joe Larson, Cemetery Administrator with our details.

The Vietnam Wall project "America's Traveling Tribute to Veterans is coming to Huachuca City April 8-10, 2008 at the Huachuca City Park. The Vietnam Wall project had various problems coming to Sierra Vista, thus it will be assembled in Huachuca City. The council will bring those concerns up with the Mayor and the city council at their earliest opportunity.

Veterans Benefits Open House is being held at the Southern Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery May 17, 2008 from 0900-1300. It is sponsored by the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services. For more information contact the Department of Veterans Services at 520-458-7144.

To improve the testing and evaluation of equipment for our troops use in combat, Rep. Gifford is co-sponsoring a bill, Providing Responsible Oversight and Testing of Equipment for Combat Troops (PROJECT) Act of 2008. It

would extend DOT&E's oversight authority in operational and survivability testing to body armor and other protective equipment to be used in combat. It would provide a consistent and standard process by which body armor is evaluated across military services. It would increase service member and public confidence in body armor provided to combat operations.

These bills are in committee:

Bill H.R. 5315 to grant the Congressional Gold Medal to a group of soldiers from World War II (Bataan March Veterans). We have one survivor in Bisbee, Arizona.
Bill H.R. 5229 to amend title 38, United States Code, to remove certain limitations on the transfer of entitlement to basic education assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill for other purposes. This bill allows veterans to pass down their education benefits to spouse or child. Some resistance from veterans that think this bill will dilute monies needed for other veteran benefits.

Bill H.R. 579 to amend title 10, United States Code, to prohibit certain increases in fees for military health care.

Trish Thompson
Greater Sierra Vista United Veterans Council
Representative