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## *House of Representatives*

IN HONOR OF SERGEANT JEREMIAH WITTMAN

HON. BOB INGLIS  
OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 24, 2010*

**Mr. Inglis of South Carolina.** Madam Speaker, I am here to honor one of America's heroes. U.S. Army Sergeant Jeremiah Wittman, age 26, was killed in Afghanistan on Saturday, February 13, 2010. Sergeant Wittman was from Montana. His wife, Karyn, is from the Chesnee/Boiling Springs area of Spartanburg County, South Carolina.

Sergeant Wittman and Karyn have a beautiful 3-year-old daughter named Miah. I got to play in Miah's doll house when I visited her grandparents' home recently. More on that in a minute.

Sergeant Wittman was doing what America's best do--he was protecting freedom, protecting us-- when an improvised explosive device was detonated near him as he was on foot patrol in Zhari province in Afghanistan.

I wonder what it means to a 3-year-old, Madam Speaker, to hear that her daddy is one of our heroes. I said that to Miah the other night at her house. I know she heard it from others because we are very patriotic people in the Upstate of South Carolina, Madam Speaker. Still, I wonder what it means to a 3-year-old.

Miah's mom, Karyn, knows what it means. She knew what it meant when representatives of the U.S. Army showed up at her parents' front door dressed in "Class A's." She knows that this Saturday an Army officer will kneel beside her and say that the President of the United States and a grateful Nation stand in appreciation of the honorable and faithful service of her husband, Jeremy.

Devoted spouses like Karyn and self-sacrificing parents like Sergeant Wittman's know that service means the possibility of not coming

home safe and sound, the possibility that the last full measure of devotion will be given on a battlefield far from home.

The people of the Upstate of South Carolina and Montana know what it means. It means that we must live our lives in gratitude to America's best; the ones who come home unscathed, the ones who come home with scars, and the ones who come home in solemn honor.

But what does it mean to Miah? Well, Madam Speaker, if you will indulge me, I will try to say what it means in a letter to Miah.

Dear Miah,

That's an awesome dollhouse you have in the living room at your grandma and grandpa's house. Thank you for letting me see the cool things you've got in there. I like the computer a lot, and the lights over the door to your doll tent are awesome. Thank you for showing me the pictures of you and your daddy.

I guess you've noticed by now that grown-ups like me cry sometimes when we hear you say that your daddy is in heaven. It's not that we're not happy for him. You know better than us grown-ups that your daddy can trust God to dry every tear. It's just that we're overwhelmed by the gift you've given. You and your Mom and your grandparents have given the rest of us the gift of your dad's life.

He was in Afghanistan protecting you and your mom mostly, but he was also there protecting me and my family and all American families. So if you see a lot of people crying, it's the only way we know to show how much we care, how much your dad's sacrifice, how much your sacrifice, means to us.

A sergeant like your dad told me recently, "When I see good things at risk, I'm inclined to fight for it. I guess that's why I'm in the Army." That's Sergeant Mennell from Texas. I don't know if Sergeant Mennell knew your dad, but I bet that's what your dad thought too. Your dad saw your future at risk, Miah, so he went to fight for you and for me and for all of us.

When I was leaving your house the other night, there was a beautiful moon hanging low in the west over the mountains you can see from the top of your driveway. It was glowing orange and looked like a bowl that could hold something. I thought of those pictures of your dad holding you. I thought of God holding the moon up there, holding your dad, holding you and your mom, holding this whole big world. It seemed like the moon was doing something else, Miah. It seemed that it was holding the hope of a lot of tomorrows. You see, as the moon falls, the sun rises on a new day. When your dad fell, it was so that you could have many more tomorrows in peace and freedom.

When I see a waxing moon glowing orange and hanging low in the west, stretching its light from South Carolina to that farm your dad loved in Montana, I'll think of you, Miah, and I'll think of your dad, and I'll pray for many tomorrows for you and for the country your dad loved.

Thank you, Miah.

Your friend,  
Bob

P.S. Keep an eye on those dinosaurs in your doll tent. You know they scare me.

Thank you, Madame Speaker, I yield back.

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