

home State of West Virginia, would be impeded by a great difficulty in getting goods to help make products to serve our ever day needs. Were it not for our cargo tank truck industry, it would not be possible to move fertilizers, baking products, plastics, and many other household products we take for granted.

All of these different products, transported in so many different kinds of uniquely designed trailers to ensure safe transportation, are vital to our national interests. Likewise, the ease with which they are transported guarantees Americans more affordable gasoline and other products, and protects our way of life. In addition, the cargo tank truck industry itself employs hundreds of thousands of Americans with good paying jobs.

As the cargo tank truck industry has evolved over the last four decades to play an increasingly integral role in our national economy, one constant has been Cliff Harvison's dedicated service to the industry, and to our Nation.

For these reasons, and many more, I am pleased to be able to honor Cliff for his service.

INTRODUCING THE VOTER OUTREACH AND TURNOUT EXPANSION ACT OF 2005

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation that will significantly alter the ways in which we conduct elections. The Voter Outreach and Turnout Expansion Act of 2005, expands upon the Help America Vote Act, HAVA, of 2002 to incorporate several necessary measures.

In the aftermath of the 2000 election, Members of Congress united in an unparalleled bipartisan effort to pass election reform legislation. HAVA was one of the most far-reaching electoral measures since the Voter's Rights Act of 1965. This one accomplishment does not, however, signify the dissolution of political disenfranchisement within our current system.

In the 2004 Presidential election, we saw numerous problems resurface. Again, voters waited for hours to cast their ballots. Across the country, newly registered voters were denied access to polls and thousands of names were wrongfully removed from voter rolls. These egregious acts of disenfranchisement affected those most vulnerable, young students, minority communities and the elderly.

Such problems will continue to persist until further action is taken to implement election reform. We must not be afraid to be innovative in our solutions. Our greatest political legacies have often been born in times of unrest and implemented under the acquiescence of skeptics.

The VOTE Act takes aim at combating voter apathy through same day voter registration, early voting, no excuse absentee voting, improved registration by mail procedures, the establishment of an Election Day holiday, and guaranteed leave on election day to allow employees to vote. Specifically, the legislation does the following:

The VOTE Act requires states to establish same-day voter registration procedures. Under

the legislation, voters who have not previously registered to vote will be permitted to register on Election Day at the appropriate polling location and vote in that election. To address concerns over voter fraud that in the past so many of my colleagues have suggested occurs, voters are required to present proof of residence and written confirmation pursuant to the Help America Vote Act. Title I of the bill is linked to the enforcement provisions of the Help America Vote Act to ensure states' compliance.

Further, the VOTE Act requires local elections supervisors to establish early voting polling locations within the jurisdiction where registered voters will be able to vote prior to election day. Early voting must commence no less than 22 days, or three weeks, prior to election day and shall be made available to voters during normal business hours each weekday. Additionally, elections supervisors must make early voting available to voters on no less than two weekend days during the three weeks.

The bill also prohibits states and local supervisors from requiring voters to provide a reason for voting absentee. All too often, voters become discouraged from voting absentee, or just voting at all, because they are required to provide a reason. Voting should not be a test where excuses are not permitted. On the contrary, absentee voting should be an option—and an easy one to take advantage of at that.

The VOTE Act also amends the Help America Vote Act to require that election supervisors provide voters with adequate time and opportunity to complete their mail-in voter registration form. In instances where the state registration deadline has already passed, supervisors are required to inform the voter of same-day voter registration opportunities that exist.

Further, my legislation requires that federal employees be given the day off on Election Day and encourages states to make Election Day a legal holiday and provide paid leave for state government employees.

Finally, the VOTE Act requires private companies with 25 or more employees to allow their staff to take up to 2 hours of paid or unpaid leave time to vote. Employees who live more than 25 miles away from their workplace are allowed to take up to three hours of leave. Enforcement of these provisions is tied into the Family Medical Leave Act. By and large, Americans who do not vote cite employment as the top reason for not voting. The VOTE Act allows them to work and vote without the fear of losing their jobs in the process.

Throughout these halls, Mr. Speaker, there have been numerous discussions of elections, yet the focus has been on who is spending what and how. We have become immersed in a discourse that is out of touch with the true needs of those we represent. As Members of Congress, it is our duty to pro actively address any and all institutional restrictions on political participation and civic engagement.

Mr. Speaker, how can we condemn the prevailing apathy among our youth if we ourselves personify that same approach? The VOTE Act will both engage new generations of voters and empower Americans in every city and State, nationwide. Our electoral concerns will not be abated unless such far-reaching legislative action is pursued. I urge my colleagues to not stand idly and watch our systems continue to weaken, lend your sup-

port to the Voter Outreach and Turnout Expansion Act.

INTRODUCTION OF SEPTEMBER 11TH HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND PATRIOTISM ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the September 11th Humanitarian Relief and Patriotism Act with Representatives PETER KING, WEINER, NADLER, HIGGINS, FARR, SERRANO, ENGEL, OWENS, McDERMOTT, LANTOS, SCHAKOWSKY, BENNIE THOMPSON, SOLIS, SCHIFF, BERMAN, PALLONE, PATRICK KENNEDY and GRIJALVA.

We are introducing this legislation because the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, left many surviving spouses and children of legal employment-based visa holders and undocumented workers in jeopardy of being deported, because their immigration status was linked to a family member who was employed at the World Trade Center. While the USA PATRIOT Act allowed these individuals to stay in the United States until September 10, 2002, that reprieve has expired. These individuals should not be forced to leave the country because of the actions of the terrorists.

The "September 11th Humanitarian Relief and Patriotism Act," which would provide for the adjustment of status (application for permanent residence, commonly known as "green card" status) or the cancellation of removal (and adjustment of status) for the spouse, child, dependent son, or dependent daughter of victims who were killed on September 11. While the Administration continues to act with care by not moving forward with deportation procedures for these individuals, their legal status remains in limbo unless they are given legal status in the United States. They should not continue to be victimized by the 9/11 terrorists by living in fear that they will have to leave their homes, jobs, and communities. Additionally, New York City Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, supports this legislation and is calling on Congress to act.

Finally, I would like to thank Moshe and Debra Steinberg for their assistance in preparing this legislation for introduction and for all of the work they have done on behalf of the victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and urge its swift passage into law.

TRIBUTE TO EIGHT SEWICKLEY WWII TUSKEGEE AIRMEN OF THE ALL AFRICAN-AMERICAN 99TH PURSUIT SQUADRON

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity and join the Daniel B. Matthews Historical Society in honoring the extraordinary patriotism and valor of eight Sewickley WWII Tuskegee Airmen of the all African-American 99th Pursuit Squadron.