

CONDEMNING IRANIAN PRESIDENT
MAHMOUD AHMANDINEJAD'S
THREATS AGAINST ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 28, 2005

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I strongly condemn the deplorable remarks made this week by the President of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmandinejad and I commend my colleagues, Congressmen TOM LANTOS (D-CA) and HENRY HYDE (R-IL), for authoring this important resolution—H. Res. 523, Condemning Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmandinejad's threats against Israel—and bringing it to the floor of the House of Representatives.

The statement by Iran's President that "Israel must be wiped off the map" demands the strongest condemnation from the entire international community. Moreover, it is reprehensible that Mr. Ahmandinejad made these statements to a group of students. In an area of the world where violence has led to intense hardship and suffering the Iranian President's statement only promotes more violence. It is a sad day when the leader of Iran would poison the minds of young people rather than inspire them to build a peaceful Middle East.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, November 1, 2005, I missed rollcall votes numbered 557 and 558. Rollcall vote No. 557 was on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3548, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located on Franklin Avenue in Pearl River, New York, as the "Heinz Ahlmeyer, Jr. Post Office Building." Rollcall vote No. 558 was on the motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended H.R. 3989, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 37598 Goodhue Avenue in Dennison, Minnesota, as the "Albert Harold Quie Post Office."

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes Nos. 557 and 558.

ON INTRODUCING THE "ELIMINATION OF BARRIERS FOR KATRINA VICTIMS ACT"

HON. ROBERT C. SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues, Congressman RANGEL of NY, Congressman CONYERS of MI, Congressman THOMPSON of MS, Congressman JEFFERSON of LA, Congressman FRANK of MA, Congresswoman JACKSON-LEE of TX, Congressman PAUL of TX, Congresswoman JOHNSON of TX, Congresswoman LEE of CA, Congressman HASTINGS of FL and Congressman AL GREEN of TX in introducing the "Elimi-

nation of Barriers for Katrina Victims Act." We are pleased to be joined by a coalition of almost 100 national, state and local organizations who have expressed their support for the legislation, such as the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, American College of Mental Health Administration, Drug Policy Alliance Network, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), NAACP, NAADAC—The Association for Addiction Professionals, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, and the National Urban League, and the list is growing as word of the legislation gets out.

Millions of Americans were displaced from their homes due to Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita and hundreds of thousands have not been able to return and may never be able to do so. Having lost their homes, their communities, their jobs and other support systems, most have required emergency food, clothing, shelter, medical, or monetary assistance. According to FEMA reports, an estimated 2.1 million Americans have already applied for federal aid. Unfortunately, many of these individuals and their families are in desperate need, but, due to a prior drug conviction, will not be able to receive certain federal assistance available to other victims in need. While it is impossible to know for sure how many families will be denied public assistance because of drug convictions, it is likely in the tens of thousands.

More than 1.5 million Americans are arrested for drug offenses every year. Several federal laws disqualify those with felony convictions to receive certain federal benefits. A recent GAO report commissioned by myself and Congressman RUSH of IL reveals that these disqualifications are having a huge impact on receipt of federal benefits for which those with prior drug convictions would otherwise receive. For example, an estimated 41,000 students were denied college assistance during the 2003/2004 academic year because of drug convictions.

While the GAO was only able to collect data from 15 public housing agencies, out of more than 3,000, those 15 agencies denied housing to almost 1,500 families because of past drug violations in 2003 alone. That indicates that there are thousands of families and tens of thousands of individuals unable to receive housing benefits because a family member has a drug conviction.

The drug conviction ban on eligibility for federal benefits also applies to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or the TANF program. TANF eligibility applies to families with minor children. One study reflected that almost 25 percent of drug offenders released from prison in 2001 were eligible for TANF benefits, but were permanently barred from receiving it due to their state's application of the federal ban for a drug conviction. While some states do not apply the federal ban completely, other states, such as Alabama, Mississippi, Texas and Virginia, where many of the displaced families are staying, have fully applied the ban.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have inflicted suffering on millions of people. The suffering will fall even harder on victims denied aid because of past drug offenses. Parents who have lost everything and are struggling to feed themselves and their family will be denied TANF and food stamps; students who have lost their school, tuition, fees, room and board,

but could continue their education in another school willing to accept them, or who were in school elsewhere when their parents lost the ability to continue paying for their education, will be denied student loans; and entire families that have lost everything in the disasters will be denied housing—all due to the federal bans for a past drug conviction.

The "Elimination of Barriers for Katrina Victims Act" applies only to past drug offenses, some of which were many years ago, and suspends the disqualification for only a 3-year period. This temporary adjustment period in federal disqualifications would allow families affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita a chance to put their lives back together through the same means as other victims who suddenly lost their homes and livelihood through no fault of their own. Therefore, we are introducing this bill today and urge our colleagues to quickly enact it into law to assist families who are otherwise hopelessly destitute because of the disasters and the impact of a drug conviction.

REINSTATEMENT OF THE CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL INCOME TAX

HON. SHERWOOD BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Superfund Revenue Reinstatement Act of 2005, a bill to reinstate the corporate environmental income tax, which expired in 1995. The bill will provide a dedicated stream of revenue for our Nation's communities as they struggle to clean up the Nation's dirtiest abandoned hazardous waste sites and recapture lost jobs where they are most needed.

First passed by Congress in 1980, the corporate environmental income tax provided a dedicated stream of revenue for the so-called Superfund trust fund. In 1995, the last year before this corporate tax expired, it raised approximately \$700 million. At a rate of 12/100 of one percent on corporate profits over \$2,000,000, the tax was virtually without any real impact on business, but supported worthy and rightful public purposes—creating jobs, rebuilding our urban communities, and cleaning up a legacy of unfettered industrial activity. The oil industry—not one company but the entire industry—paid just \$38 million in 1995. That's about what is earned by the industry in the first hour of the first day of the new business year.

Reinstating the corporate environmental income tax would raise about the same amount of revenue as it did in 1995, according to estimates made by the Joint Committee on Taxation in 2003. That's a negligible burden to provide dedicated funds for restoring superfund sites. But those are estimates are a few years old. With corporate profits at current levels, the revenue derived could certainly be higher.

And, where are these superfund sites? In urban areas of course, where redevelopment is needed and where jobs are needed. But what's been happening? Industry is developing greenfields in the far out suburbs because they don't want to touch superfund

sites. And hundreds of thousands of brown-fields across the nation sit idle instead of being returned to productive use. Can we really continue to afford leapfrogging existing and valuable infrastructure to build anew?

That's why the Superfund needs dedicated revenue. In 1995 when the tax expired, the Superfund held a significant surplus, so few people were concerned. Today, however, as many had predicted, the surplus is gone. An empty trust fund, annual budget squabbles, recent budget cuts, and larger and more complex site cleanups have hurt the superfund program, slowing or delaying cleanups. The lack of dedicated revenue for superfund has also put pressure on other parts of the EPA's budget. That pressure surely has been felt by the Brownfields program, which is our premier program to bring sites back to productive use and hasn't yet been fully funded at authorized levels.

It is all the more distressing that we let the corporate environmental income tax lapse 10 years ago—forgoing \$7 billion of dedicated funding for cleanup and redevelopment.

That is why it is time to rededicate ourselves to creating jobs, rebuilding urban America, and eliminating this core cancer in so many of our communities. And isn't it refreshing to advocate for a plan with worthy objectives and a method to pay for it!

HONORING ROSA PARKS

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mrs. Rosa Lee Parks.

Mrs. Parks's refusal to give up her seat to a white man on a bus in Alabama in 1955 triggered a 381-day boycott of buses, organized by the then little-known Baptist minister Martin Luther King Jr. She did so without knowing the support she would rally.

Her single act of quiet courage and defiance on that December day undeniably became a watershed moment in the history of U.S. civil rights.

It's most fitting that at today's funeral in Detroit, R&B legend Aretha Franklin sang "The Impossible Dream" in honor of Mrs. Parks. It was that action nearly 50 years ago that sparked what seemed at the time to be the impossible dream of the modern civil rights movement, culminating in the 1964 federal Civil Rights Bill.

In 1996, Mrs. Parks received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, awarded to civilians who make outstanding contributions to American life. In 1999, she was awarded the Congressional gold medal, the nation's highest civilian honor.

Mr. Speaker, with the permission of this House, I would like to enter into the RECORD the words of a civil rights leader in my community, the Rev. Dr. Benjamin K. Watts, Pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church in New London (CT).

"Rosa Parks was a woman of character, commitment and courage. When she sat down the world stood up against injustice, bigotry and hatred. Mrs. Parks was not the first to refuse to live down to the status quo of inequality yet because of her unimpeach-

able character she unwittingly became a spark that ignited the flame of passion that created ultimate change. Like Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier in baseball, the right character was necessary in order to break the back of racism. Her commitment to social justice gave her iconoclastic status as the epitome of courage and commitment. Her passing leaves a void in civil society that each one of us should seek to fill by living lives of high moral value always refusing to sit at the back of the bus of life and ready to accept our place at the forefront of the battle for social change."—Rev. Dr. Benjamin K. Watts

Mrs. Rosa Lee Parks, this great American hero, deserves not only our tributes and gratitude, but our continuing commitment to peace, justice, equality, and freedom for all.

May God rest her soul.

IRAN NONPROLIFERATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2005

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to clarify a confusing or mistaken impression that may have been left by one of my colleagues during the House floor debate on S. 1713, the Iran Nonproliferation Amendments Act of 2005, for which I served as the majority floor manager.

The purpose of enacting S. 1713, as amended by the House, is twofold: to strengthen our nonproliferation tools in dealing with Iran and also Syria, and at the same time enable necessary cooperation between NASA and U.S. businesses with their Russian counterparts on the International Space Station. Just to be clear, in no way does S. 1713 favor our space goals at the expense of effectiveness in nonproliferation. In fact, the time-limited authority we give NASA to purchase, either directly or through U.S. companies, Russian space goods and services, is in my view a net plus for nonproliferation, not a minus.

That said, I want to stress that the legislation the House adopted, and the intent of that legislation, allows NASA significant flexibility in using Russian space goods and services to support the assembly and operation of the International Space Station between now and January 1, 2012. NASA is free to make payments pursuant to the Intergovernmental Agreement on ISS "or any protocol, agreement, memorandum of understanding, or contract related thereto." As Chairman HYDE pointed out in his floor statement, this means that after enactment of this legislation, NASA can enter into new arrangements to meet our needs regarding ISS, but that NASA will not enter into new obligations beyond or unrelated to the ISS.

The primary limitations with respect to ISS payments are the sunset date of January 1, 2012, and the existing statutory requirement that the specific Russian entities to be paid have not been sanctioned as proliferators under the earlier sections of the Iran Nonproliferation Act.

I point all of this out because my friend and colleague, Mr. SHERMAN, mistakenly suggested during the floor debate that the phrase

"necessary to meet United States obligations" added to the Hyde-Lantos substitute to S. 1713 implies that NASA could not purchase Russian goods or services if any other alternative was available. That is certainly not the plain meaning of the phrase, nor the intent behind it. However, because Mr. SHERMAN explicitly invited correction, I am doing so here in some detail.

Here are three examples of arrangements that are wholly consistent with the legislative text, the Senate and House floor statements by the architects of this legislation, and the Administration's request for relief, but which would not be allowed under Mr. SHERMAN's interpretation.

First, NASA has stated it wants to use the Russian Soyuz crew capsule to exchange long-term ISS research crews, even during the time the Space Shuttle is flying, because this will allow the Shuttle astronauts to focus on the job of assembling the Space Station to meet our international partner commitments during the Shuttle's limited remaining lifetime. Under the previously negotiated agreements between our countries, Russia is no longer obligated to provide NASA with Soyuz crew transport seats. Therefore, in this example, NASA would not be paying Russia for an obligation they have promised to us. However, because NASA could theoretically use the Space Shuttle as an alternative to carry out crew transfer, albeit at some risk and a cost to our other ISS commitments, Mr. SHERMAN's inference would suggest NASA cannot do this. Given that the primary exigency for adopting this legislation is enabling continued U.S. occupation of ISS beyond April of next year, which requires payment for training and launch to ISS of a NASA astronaut on the next Soyuz launch, Mr. SHERMAN's interpretation is incorrect.

Second, Chairman HYDE's statement explicitly makes clear that cargo resupply services to ISS using technology developed by Russian companies would be legal under the amended Act, again within the limitations I stated above. This would be the case regardless of whether the Space Shuttle might technically be available to deliver cargo to ISS, namely through the middle of 2010.

Third, some bidders may wish to use a very reliable and capable U.S. launch vehicle, one which the Defense Department uses right now to launch critical military satellites, and which happens to incorporate Russian rocket engines. Nothing in this bill was meant to preclude such activities, even though there might be similar launch vehicles which do not use Russian rocket engines. Mr. HYDE's statement makes this clear.

Beyond those examples, I would offer the words of House Science Committee Chairman BOEHLERT as further disputation of Mr. SHERMAN's reading. In his floor statement, Chairman BOEHLERT declares that "by setting a specific end date for our current relationship with the Russians" the bill "encourages NASA to find commercial firms that are not dependent on the Russians to carry cargo in the future." While I may disagree with that goal or a sunset date's effectiveness as a management tool, if Mr. SHERMAN's reading were true, the sunset date would be superfluous, because once a U.S. provider whose service had no Russian content emerged, NASA would be barred from any further payments, let alone purchases, from companies which do use