

in small and rustic communities all across the West. Judge Pryor has worked tirelessly at the state and federal level to ensure attention to basic services such as education and health care in small towns. She's worked hard to maintain funding for county roads while promoting and encouraging economic development and commerce within the county.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the joy to work closely with Laura on numerous issues through the years, and know well the deep devotion she brings to her job each and every day in representing her fellow citizens in Gilliam County. It is this devotion that propelled a county effort to construct a Grain Quality Lab that has enabled area wheat growers to become more competitive in the global marketplace by enhancing quality and productivity. I was honored to help her in this endeavor, and will be visiting this topnotch facility next month. She has also been a strong proponent for renewable energy efforts and has worked to locate wind farms within the county for an additional tax base and source of revenue.

While it is very difficult to choose Judge Pryor's most memorable accomplishments, many would say it has been her successful effort to unite rural Oregon as one voice. Laura's leadership among her elected peers led to the establishment of the Eastern Oregon Rural Alliance, which joins government officials with residents from all across the vast territory of eastern Oregon in advocacy for rural issues. Her efforts ultimately led to the creation of the Office of Rural Policy, which was established by the state of Oregon to examine how state policies impact rural communities and act as an advisory branch to the state legislature and the governor.

Mr. Speaker, my remarks illustrate but a few of the tremendous accomplishments Judge Pryor has made during her distinguished career. I appreciate my colleagues joining me today in congratulating Judge Laura Pryor, an extraordinary lady and great American. I wish Laura and her husband, Earl, many years of continued happiness and success.

SAFETEA-LU AMENDMENTS ACT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I insert in the RECORD a letter from me to Speaker HASTERT regarding H.R. 5689, making technical corrections to SAFETEA-LU.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, September 29, 2006.

Hon. DENNIS J. HASTERT,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On June 28, 2006 the House passed H.R. 5689, making technical corrections to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA: LU). Yesterday, I introduced a bill that revises H.R. 5689 to incorporate changes that the Senate has asked us to include (H.R. 6233). These changes are necessary to ensure that all policies, programs and projects embodied in last year's long-term highway, transit, and highway safety authorization bill are implemented as intended by the Congress.

On September 14, 2006 the House passed H. Res. 1000, instituting a new standing order of the House with regard to earmarks in authorization, appropriations, and tax measures. H. Res. 1000 provides that, in order to consider a bill, the committee of jurisdiction must list all earmarks included in the bill and committee report along with the names of Members requesting the earmarks.

The bi-partisan bill that I introduced yesterday has not been reported by the Committee, so there is no report or list of earmarks. In reading the standing order, I concluded that the requirement that a list appear with this bill does not apply because the point of order described in section 1(c) of H. Res. 1000 does not lie against a bill considered under suspension of the rules. I intend to move to suspend the rules of the House to pass H.R. 6233.

This bill does not increase the amount of funding that is designated for projects in SAFETEA: LU. There are changes to the descriptions of projects that are currently in SAFETEA: LU and there are some projects to replace projects in SAFETEA: LU that cannot be executed or implemented. In this correction bill, however, the total amount of funding designated for projects is identical to the amount that was designated in SAFETEA: LU.

Where this bill does provide funding (which is offset by a rescission of contract authority), the legislative sections providing such funding do not meet the earmarking definition, because no entity is named as the intended recipient of the funds. Where this bill does designate specific entities, or amend underlying project designations in SAFETEA: LU, it does not provide new funding. In addition this bill provides for no new outlays. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office has scored the bill as reducing contract authority by \$4 million over five years.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG,
Chairman

IN HONOR OF JOHN SIMPSON

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate John Simpson on the occasion of his retirement from public service. John has worked as Director of Constituent Services and Senior Issues in the office of Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer since January 2006. Prior to this position, Mr. Simpson served as Director of Constituent Services for then Assemblymember Scott M. Stringer on the Upper West Side of Manhattan since 1993. John has assisted hundreds of constituents throughout Manhattan in landlord-tenant disputes, consumer issues, and every other problem in the spectrum.

Mr. Simpson came to work in government after 40 years in private industry at the Hallen Construction Corporation where he worked after serving our country. He served in the United States Air Force from 1951–1955 and was recognized officially for Superior Efficiency as the Head of the Morning Report Unit.

On the Upper West Side, Mr. Simpson is a leader in our community. He is an active member of the Church of the Blessed Sac-

rament on West 71st Street, where he is a co-leader in one of the soup kitchen teams. He is also a Vice Chairman of Community Services and member of the Board of Directors of the Ansonia Democratic Club. In 1999, the West Side Spirit named Mr. Simpson a "Hero of the West Side" for his work towards social justice.

For his commitment to his community and his City, it is my privilege to congratulate John Simpson on his distinguished record of service and his retirement.

RECOGNIZING FINANCIAL PLANNING WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 973, and the goals and the ideals of Financial Planning Month. I am proud to say that I am an original co-sponsor of this bill, and a member of the Financial Literacy Education Caucus.

I would first like to start by thanking my colleagues Mrs. BIGGERT and Mr. Hinojosa for their leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, we need to be paying more attention to financial literacy in this country, and to making sure our constituents have the tools to be responsible consumers, good savers and savvy investors.

An estimated 40 percent of Americans say they know only some, a little or not much, about how to manage their finances and only 10 percent of college students have had financial education in high school.

And yet, everyday life requires an increasing knowledge of banking and finance. The average American family spends \$200,000 to raise a child to the age of 18, but the overall savings in this country barely breaks above 1 percent.

Prices for basic essentials—for health care, housing, schooling—are all skyrocketing. How are our families going to pay for it all if they aren't saving?

I am pleased that the Congress is voting to pass this financial planning awareness resolution at this time. Next week, I will be hosting the banking and finance portion of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Summit.

Financial literacy education is such an important topic that I have chosen to make it the focus of our summit. During our discussion, we will talk about "best practices" in financial literacy education.

It is essential that our citizens develop the tools of good financial management. These are the tools that will allow them to build wealth to enrich their families and communities.

They are also the tools that will protect them from fraud and exploitation, and help them be more responsible with their finances. This is not just important for individuals and their families, it is important to our nation as a whole. Less debt, more savings and more investment will be the foundation of our future economic success.

Once again I thank my colleagues for bringing H. Res. 973 to the floor and urge its passage.

MILITARY COMMISSIONS ACT OF
2006

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to S. 3930, the Military Commissions Act. I oppose this bill because I stand strong for our troops. I stand strong for the Constitution. I stand strong for the values that have made our country, the United States of America, the greatest country in the history of the world. I oppose this legislation because it is not becoming a nation that is strong in its values, confident of its future, and proud of its ancient heritage.

Mr. Speaker, let us be crystal clear: All Americans, and Democrats especially, want those responsible for 9/11 and other terrorist acts to be tried fairly and punished accordingly, and we want those convictions to be upheld by our courts.

Democrats want the President to have the best possible intelligence to prevent future terrorist attacks on the United States and its allies.

Democrats agreed with the President when he said "whether the terrorists are brought to justice or justice brought to the terrorists, justice will be done." But Democrats understand that justice requires the Congress to establish a system for trying suspected terrorists that is fundamentally fair and consistent with the Geneva Conventions.

We should abide by the Geneva Conventions not out of some slavish devotion to international law or desire to coddle terrorists, but because adherence to the Geneva Conventions protects American troops and affirms American values.

S. 3930, the compromise before us, includes some improvements that I strongly support. For example, evidence obtained through torture can no longer be used against the accused. Similarly, the compromise bill provides that hearsay evidence can be challenged as unreliable.

Perhaps the most important improvement over the bill passed by the House is that accused terrorists will have the right to rebut all evidence offered by the prosecution. As is the case in the existing military justice system, classified evidence can be summarized, redacted, declassified, or otherwise made available to the accused without compromising sources or methods. This change to the bill goes a long way toward minimizing the chance that an accused may be convicted with secret evidence, a shameful practice favored by dictators and totalitarians but beneath the dignity of a great nation like the United States. As Senator JOHN MCCAIN said: "I think it's important that we stand by 200 years of legal precedents concerning classified information because the defendant should have a right to know what evidence is being used."

However, I am concerned that there is reason to believe that even with this compromise legislation, this system of military commissions may lead to endless litigation and get struck down by the courts. Then we would find ourselves back here again next year, or 5 years from now, trying to develop a system that can

finally bring the likes of Khalid Sheik Mohammed to justice. Why would we want to give terrorist detainees a "get out of jail free" card when we can avoid that by establishing military commissions that work. As currently written, the compromise bill has provisions that could lead to the reversal of a conviction.

Specifically, the bill contains a section that strips the federal courts of jurisdiction over habeas corpus petitions filed prior to the passage of the Detainee Treatment Act last December on behalf of detainees at Guantanamo Bay.

Mr. Speaker, nine former federal judges were so alarmed by this prospect that they were compelled go public with their concerns: "Congress would thus be skating on this constitutional ice in depriving the federal courts of their power to hear the cases of Guantanamo detainees. . . . If one goal of the provision is to bring these cases to a speedy conclusion, we can assure from our considerable experience that eliminating habeas would be unconstitutional."

Mr. Speaker, common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention requires that a military commission be a regularly constituted court affording all the necessary "judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples." Notwithstanding the provision in the House bill asserting that the military commissions established therein satisfy this standard, the fact is that many other nations will disagree. Simply saying so does not make it so. Moreover, they may well be right. Consider this, Mr. Speaker:

The compromise allows statements to be entered into evidence that were obtained through cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and lesser forms of coercion if the statement was obtained before passage of the Detainee Treatment Act last December.

To provide limited immunity to government agents involved in the CIA detention and interrogation program, the bill amends the War Crimes Act of 1996 to encompass only "grave breaches" of the Geneva Conventions. U.S. agents could not be tried under the War Crimes Act for past actions that degraded and humiliated detainees. The bill also limits any use of international law such as the Geneva Convention in interpreting the War Crimes Act.

Mr. Speaker, what is sometimes lost sight of in all the tumult and commotion is that the reason we have observed the Geneva Conventions since their adoption in 1949 is to protect members of our military. But as the Judge Advocate Generals pointed out, the compromise bill could place United States service members at risk by establishing an entirely new international standard that American troops could be subjected to if captured overseas. As Rear Admiral Bruce McDonald testified: "I go back to the reciprocity issue that we raised earlier, that I would be very concerned about other nations looking in on the United States and making a determination that, if it's good enough for the United States, it's good enough for us, and perhaps doing a lot of damage and harm internationally if one of our servicemen—or women—were taken and held as a detainee."

What's more, Mr. Speaker, the Geneva Conventions also protect those not in uniform—special forces personnel, diplomatic personnel, CIA agents, contractors, journalists, missionaries, relief workers and all other civilians. Changing our commitment to this treaty could endanger them, as well.

We can fix these deficiencies easily if we only have the will. What we should do is recommit the bill with instructions to add two important elements: (1) expedited constitutional review of the legislation; and (2) a requirement that these military commissions be reauthorized after 3 years.

Under expedited review, the constitutionality of the military commission system could be tested and determined quickly and early—before there are trials and convictions. And it would help provide stability and sure-footing for novel legislation that sets up a military commissions system unlike anything in American history.

Such an approach provides no additional rights to alleged terrorists. All it does is give the Supreme Court of the United States the ability to decide whether the military commissions system under this act is legal or not. It simply guarantees rapid judicial review.

Second, any system of military commissions to deal with detainees should be required to be reauthorized in 3 years. There are several good reasons for requiring Congress to reaffirm its judgment that such tribunals are necessary:

The Military Commissions Act of 2006 is a far-reaching measure that implements an entirely new kind of military justice system outside the Uniform Code of Military Justice. It has many complex provisions.

This legislation has been rushed to the floor. It has numerous provisions that are still poorly understood by many in Congress. By requiring a reauthorization in 3 years, we give Congress the ability to carefully review how this statute is working in the real world.

Providing for a reauthorization in 3 years is the best way to ensure congressional oversight. This reauthorization requirement will allow Congress to evaluate the effectiveness of the military commission provisions and decide whether they need any modifications in the future.

The reauthorization requirement in the Patriot Act has worked well—compelling Congress to review how various provisions in the Patriot Act have worked. As a result of congressional review, important modifications in the Patriot Act were signed into law in January 2006 when 16 provisions were reauthorized.

Mr. Speaker, even Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee admitted that the only way Congress was able to get information out of the Justice Department about the operation of the Patriot Act was that Congress had to reauthorize it—similarly, the only way Congress will be able to perform proper oversight on military commissions is this similar requirement that the program must be reauthorized. The reauthorization requirement is a critical tool in Congress' ability to hold the administration accountable and review the military commission program's performance.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot recall being asked to render final judgment on a matter of such scope, consequence, and moment in so short a period of time with such a sparsely developed legislative record. Now is not the time to rush blindly forward. Rather, now more than ever, it is important to take our time and make the right decision and establish the right policy. And the right policy is not to jettison the Geneva Convention.

We should not try to redefine the Geneva Convention. We should not do anything to alter our international obligations in an election-year rush. We cannot use international