

As the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Transportation, I am keenly aware that over the years, the Committee on Homeland Security has conducted thorough and extensive oversight into the cause for attrition within the TSA workforce. The attrition rate at TSA was high enough that it caught the attention of our committee.

Consistently, TSA personnel who decided to leave the agency criticized the availability of security training and responsiveness of line supervisors to workplace concerns. We must protect the tens of millions of dollars that American taxpayers have invested in hiring, training, and deploying TSA staff.

I strongly believe that Administrator Pistole's decision was the right one and his decision must be supported. TSA can be strengthened by providing their workers with a personnel system that is fair, credible and transparent, and with a voice in the development of workplace quality standards that will make the traveling public even safer.

There are currently a number of examples, throughout the federal government, where the conferring of collective bargaining rights have helped to secure the Nation. From the Customs and Border Protection to the Federal Protective Service, we see that collective bargaining rights can be made available in furtherance of security.

TSA employees have already begun to assert their right to collective bargaining. This amendment comes at the worst time, when TSOs are currently voting on selecting union representation. With our Nation and our transportation, in particular, facing serious and credible terrorist threats, this is not the time to punish our frontline homeland security personnel. We must give them the tools and resources to effectively perform their duties.

The Pistole decision cleared the way for an election and, in April, the Federal Labor Relations Authority tallied the votes. While neither of the competing unions won the vote outright, the message that the 40,000 Transportation Security Officers sent was unequivocal—they want to be unionized. There is a run-off underway.

This amendment would recklessly bring all the progress to a halt and unnecessarily damage morale within the TSA when the nation is at a state of "heightened alert."

—————
BRENT BESHORE

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 2, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a locally coordinated, social media-based fundraiser that was held recently in Columbia, MO, for the Joplin tornado relief effort that raised more than \$1 million.

This story begins on Sunday, May 22, 2011 with Brent Beshore, a Joplin native turned Columbia entrepreneur, who immediately after the tornado struck Joplin began to call, email,

text and Facebook family and friends to ensure they were safe. Wanting more information, but without anywhere to go, Brent created a Facebook page titled "Joplin, MO Tornado Recovery" so others would have a place to get and share information. Brent then began pulling information from a Twitter feed set up to track Joplin and tornado keywords, information and requests and sharing it with the group. The Facebook page grew almost instantaneously from 60 likes, to 600, then to 6000 and continued to grow at an almost exponential pace. The group currently has over 170,000 likes.

Brent reached out to Tim Rich, executive director of the Heart of Missouri United Way and a former staff member for my predecessor, Congressman Kenny Hulshof, to set up a fund for relief efforts. Tim without hesitation set up a special fund that would go one hundred percent of its proceeds to Joplin tornado relief. Within hours of the tornado, Brent and Tim had established the world's first dedicated tornado relief fund for Joplin. They quickly established an ambitious fundraising goal of \$500,000. KOMU-TV, the NBC-affiliated television station for Mid-Missouri also played a key role in getting the word out about the fundraising efforts and even held a telethon to assist Joplin.

Through these efforts donations came in from small towns in Missouri to as far away as Saudi Arabia, Sweden and South Africa. A simple idea had quickly turned into a global operation.

Brent was in contact with politicians, musicians, disaster relief experts, and Fortune 500 charitable foundations. Social media was constantly updated and organized.

The results were nothing short of astonishing. By Thursday May 26, their fundraising efforts surpassed their greatest expectations, taking in over \$1 million. The team had executed a flawless event including an on-air prime time telethon and had collected donations from around the world. The Facebook page was referenced as a go-to resource by most national media outlets. The relief efforts were even re-tweeted by Oprah Winfrey.

The idea of one man, executed with the help of his friends and his community, has benefited so many. I ask my colleagues in joining me and thanking all the volunteers who made this effort a resounding success. I also ask my colleagues to continue to keep all of the people impacted by this disaster in their thoughts and prayers.

—————
HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
SERGEANT CRAIG BERRY, AFTER
20 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE
TO THE NORWICH POLICE
DEPARTMENT

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 2, 2011

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Sergeant Craig Berry of Norwich,

NY. Sergeant Berry recently retired after 20 years of dedicated service in the Norwich City Police Department.

Sergeant Berry began his career with the Norwich Police Department at the age of 25, on March 17, 1991. Twenty years later, the department honored the retirement of one of its finest officers on April 16, 2011. Berry not only played an important role in the community, but was also especially appreciated for his help with modernizing the department's technology.

Law enforcement officers must be recognized for the true bravery and selflessness that they display on the job every day. Sergeant Berry is yet another example of this, an honorable American, who has dedicated 20 years of his life to the improvement and safety of his community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in honoring Sergeant Craig Berry for his 20 years of exemplary service on behalf of the Norwich community and Police Department.

—————
A TRIBUTE TO LORETTA SIEMAN

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 2, 2011

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievement of Loretta Sieman who was recently named Citizen of the Year by the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce.

Loretta Sieman has been an active member of the West Des Moines community for numerous years, serving on the school board and the city council. She has also been instrumental in various other organizations, including the Science Center of Iowa board, the Junior Achievement of Central Iowa board, the Winefest board, the Prairie Meadows grants board, and the Metro Advisory Council.

As the former vice president of community relations for the Business Publications Corporation and owner of LJS Consulting, she has earned several prestigious honors and awards over the years. Loretta has been recognized in Who's Who in Secondary School Education, and has earned the Main Street Governor's Office Individual Volunteer of the Year Award, Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute A. Arthur Davis Award, and the 2009 Business Record Woman of Influence Award.

The West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce could not have chosen a better recipient for this award. I commend Loretta for her dedication to community involvement. I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress will join me in congratulating Loretta in being selected to receive this award. It is an honor to serve as her representative, and I wish her the best of luck in the future.