

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF ROBERT COCHRAN

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2013

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Robert Cochran upon his retirement from the U.S. House of Representatives. Bob has dedicated his life to public service. He came to the U.S. House of Representatives in October 1989. During his time Bob has reported the Joint Session speeches of Queen Elizabeth II, Boris Yeltsin, a State of the Union speech by President Bill Clinton, and the post-9/11 speech of President George W. Bush.

Bob was born into a family of court reporters. His grandfather founded and operated a court reporting school in St. Paul, Minnesota. He taught stenotype to Bob's father, Robert Cochran, who later became an Official Reporter with the House of Representatives from 1964 to 1984. Bob's father was the first machine stenographer to report on the House Floor.

Bob first began his work for the federal government as a GS-2 file clerk for the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon. He began his court reporting career as a freelance reporter for Alderson Reporting in Washington, D.C., where he reported government agency hearings for the Federal Communications Commission, Federal Trade Commission, and National Institutes of Health. He also covered congressional hearings for Alderson.

In 1971, Bob moved to American Samoa to serve as court reporter for the High Court in Pago Pago. It was while he was in American Samoa that he met his wife, Mona.

Bob and Mona returned to the continental United States in 1975. Bob began working as a free-lance reporter then went on to serve as an Official Reporter with the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Maryland, and later the Circuit Court for Wicomico County, Maryland, until he joined the U.S. House of Representatives. Bob earned a BS in Business Administration from Salisbury State University, Salisbury, Maryland, in 1983.

Bob is an avid photographer and runner, having completed several marathons and ultra-marathons (50-milers). He coached Little League and was a member of the Lions Club. He currently serves as an Official Reporter to House Committees, where he covers open and classified hearings and interviews, as well as Leadership press conferences.

Bob is the proud father of four children and has eight grandchildren.

Upon his retirement on June 2, 2014, Bob will leave behind a legacy that will permeate throughout the House for years to come. Through his dedication to this institution, Bob will always be a part of this nation's history. His talent and his wry humor will be missed.

SUCCESS AND OPPORTUNITY
THROUGH QUALITY CHARTER
SCHOOLS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2014

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 10) to amend the Charter School Program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965:

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Chair, today, I rise to oppose H.R. 10 the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act, which reauthorizes the charter school program in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

While I recognize that there are public charter schools that are providing students quality public education, I reject the notion that we have to accept inequity between public charter schools and the rest of the public school system. While H.R. 10 does begin to address some of the inequities, it does not go far enough in leveling the playing field between public charter schools and the public non-charter schools—where the overwhelming majority of our children are educated.

Charter accountability, transparency and financial oversight are not sufficiently addressed in H.R. 10, yet they are the cornerstones of inequity between public charter and public non-charter schools. However, through the amendments process, I tried to strengthen the bill.

One of my amendments would have increased financial oversight by limiting the compensation of charter school administrators. Under this amendment, charter school administrators' could not be compensated at a rate higher than the highest paid education official in the state. For New York, that would mean that public charter school administrators could be paid no more than John King, the New York State Commissioner of Education, whose salary is \$212,500 per year. This amendment was inspired by a 2013 New York Daily News article which noted that many of the city's charter schools' administrators earned significantly more than the Chancellor of New York City schools. I believe that public charter school resources should be focused on classroom instruction, not exuberant salaries. Unfortunately, this amendment was rejected by the Republicans.

I also tried to increase charter accountability by submitting an amendment requiring charter schools to disclose their student retention rates. In Brooklyn, where families have many charter school choices, it can sometimes be difficult to differentiate between the schools. Parents who are trying to decide where their children should attend school need to have comprehensive information on the performance of public charter schools in their area. Knowing the student retention rate for public

charter schools would enable parents and government officials to reach informed decisions about the performance of public charter schools.

Ironically, even the fact that we are reauthorizing charter schools today is yet another example of the inequity between public charter and public non-charter schools. This bill will likely move forward in the Senate, whereas the Elementary and Secondary School Act, which reauthorizes public non-charter schools, languishes in the Senate.

Though my student retention rate amendment was incorporated into the bill, I remain in strong opposition to this bill because it does not go far enough in achieving parity between public charter schools and public non-charter schools.

There are over 49.5 million public school students in America. Public non-charter schools continue to educate the vast majority of students in America. Therefore, we must improve and strengthen public education, so that our children will be able to successfully compete and thrive in a 21st century global economy. To accomplish this both public non-charter and public charter schools must peacefully, co-exist on equitable grounds. No equity will exist until public charter and public non-charter schools have the same accountability, transparency and financial oversight requirements. Otherwise, our children and ultimately our society will continue to suffer the cost of doing nothing.

As the debate regarding the challenges between public charter and public non-charter schools rages on, I hope that policy makers will devote significant time, energy and resources to address issues of inequity.

IN RECOGNITION OF JUDGE BRIAN
MERRICK

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Judge Brian Merrick of Orleans District Court upon his retirement.

Judge Merrick first took up his gavel over twenty-five years ago in Lynn, but transferred to Orleans in idyllic Cape Cod a little over a decade ago. By his own accord, he quickly became accustomed to life on the Cape. Known for his sharp legal mind, strong wit, and habit of wearing bow ties and boat shoes underneath his judicial robes, Judge Merrick has been admired by many throughout his career. He was appointed First Justice of Orleans District Court in 2013, an honor that aptly reflected his many years of service to the Commonwealth. His fellow judges, courthouse employees, and many others who have worked with him throughout the years agree that he will be sorely missed as he steps down from this position.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Judge Brian Merrick upon his retirement. I ask

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