

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING SARAH ELISABETH ENGLAND ON THE OCCASION OF HER BAT MITZVAH

**HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 16, 2014*

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the thirteenth birthday and Bat Mitzvah celebration of Sarah Elisabeth England. In the company of her parents Lori Slass and Bill England, as well as her grandparents, uncles, classmates, and numerous friends and neighbors, Sarah celebrated her Bat Mitzvah at Congregation KolAmi in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, on December 13, 2014, her thirteenth birthday. Sarah is a wonderful young lady, and the ceremony she led with Rabbi Elliot Holin was rich in both tradition and meaning. Sarah's thoughtful, articulate, and touching comments during the ceremony were a particular highlight of the celebration, and I would like to share them here so everyone can become familiar with this promising young lady.

SARAH ENGLAND'S DVAR TORAH

I enjoy being Jewish because of the feeling that everyone is friends and family. I am proud to be part of a tradition that has been going on for thousands of years. And I am glad that I am learning about the tragedies that have happened to our people. Don't get me wrong, I hate the idea that this stuff has happened to us, but I am glad that we are not trying to hide them from our younger generations. These are things that cannot be allowed to forget. For if the world is to forget, it will be much easier for it to happen again.

My favorite holy day is Tu b'Shevat, the New Year of Trees. Even though it's not as popular as say, Rosh Hashanah, it is an entire holiday wrapped around something I love, nature!

My Mitzvah Project is helping women get business clothing so they can get back up on their feet to find jobs and other opportunities. I have done a drive to collect clothing and I will be volunteering to separate clothing in the coming months.

A particularly transforming personal experience I have had was when I realized how poorly the LGBTQ community is treated, and I was appalled. I could not believe that people would treat each other like this. People complain about something that is racist or sexist, but they overlook how people treat people who just love each other. When I found out that my family members were part of the LGBTQ community, I couldn't stop smiling. I am so proud of them and everyone who keeps fighting. I hope that marrying someone you truly love is soon legal in all states.

I chose to chant verses from Genesis 37:5-8 and 19-24 of my Torah Portion. It is about Joseph telling his brothers his dream, and their plans for revenge. The narrative warns us not to talk about something, even a dream, that shows you overpowering someone. It could make them mad and ruin your relationship with them. It also shows that the response of hatred could make you do

things that you might not mean to do, but in the heat and anger of the moment, might make you do crazy things.

My two favorite prayers are the Avote v'Imahote and the G'vurote. Even though my beliefs in god have changed, I think these prayers truly help us understand how he tries to use his powers for good.

If I were to re-write the Avote, it would read, "Thank You, God, for our mothers and fathers from the beginning. Thank You for creating us. Thank You for being You. Thank You for Your love and kindness. We are forever grateful. Blessed are You, God, helper and shield of Sarah."

If I were to re-write the G'vurote, it would read: "Thank You, God, for life. Thank You for creation. Thank You for freedom. Thank You for Your many mighty acts. Thank You for everything. Who is like You: creator and destroyer of life? Who is like You, all-powerful being?"

As for my relationship with God, it's not that I don't believe in something, it's just that if God really cared about all of their creations, then why are people starving and going to war and committing mass murder? I don't think that God functions in the way that some people think God does. I think that God just created us and said, "Have fun!" To quote Rabbi in a note he left me during our time in writing this speech: "the interesting and fascinating thing about free will is that we make the choices and bear the responsibility, but it is always easier to point our finger outward to blame God or others, rather than inward to take responsibility for what we have done wrong as individuals/community/society".

I was motivated to study for my Bat Mitzvah by my mother. She has helped me so much during my studies, and even made sure I was listening to the recordings of my portion during my concussion. The idea of being able to say that I have had my Bat Mitzvah is awesome! And I don't mind having my thirteenth birthday party on the same day. Thank you mom, Rabbi, and everyone who has ever helped me with my Hebrew, you are the truly amazing people in this world.

Rabbi Holin asked me to talk about some of the greatest challenges facing our country or the world, and I think it is the need for greater gun control. The idea that someone can obtain a weapon capable of murdering men, women, and children with great futures to be had, just makes me sick. It is wrong that people can acquire guns so easily. I would pass a law that states, "To own a gun, you must undergo multiple mental and physical tests administered by a higher force". A police member or maybe a new job could be created specially trained in this task. I would also ask that anyone who owns a gun at the moment to also take the test so that we know if they are able to have one.

Some personal goals I have are being able to fully recover from my concussion, being able to see the LGBTQ community fully accepted as who they are, seeing gun violence stopping, and getting into a good college.

I would like to take a moment now to thank all of the people that have helped me to be where I am today, my mom and dad, Rabbi Holan, Rebecca Schwartz, Mrs. Holtzman, Mr. Monblatt, and anyone else who helped me during this journey and during my concussion.

THANKING KATHLEEN THERESE MEANY FOR HER SERVICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE MWRD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 16, 2014*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kathleen Therese Meany who will retire from her position as President of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago.

Commissioner Meany is a former professor of Political Science. She taught at Harold Washington College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Roosevelt University and her Master's Degree from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Commissioner Meany was elected to the Board of Commissioners in 1990 and served as Vice President for 16 years. Her eight fellow Commissioners then unanimously elected her to serve as President in January 2013. She also serves as Chairman of the Ethics Committee and the Pension, Human Resources and Civil Service Committee, as well as Vice Chairman for the Federal Legislation Committee, the Finance Committee and the Maintenance and Operations Committee.

One of her accomplishments on the MWRD Board was the introduction of a program to collect and properly dispose of household hazardous waste, which had previously been discharged indiscriminately into the sewage system. I commend Commissioner Meany for always looking out for the best interests of the people she represents and hope that future commissioners will look to her as a fine example.

Commissioner Meany has made it her duty to keep the communities of the Chicago area connected to the MWRD's operations. She is truly a dedicated public official and it is only appropriate that the Kathleen Therese Meany Presidential Garden was dedicated to her on June 20th in Cicero, Illinois.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Commissioner Meany for all she has done for the Chicago area and wish her all the best as she moves forward after retiring from the Board.

IN HONOR OF CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER MANUEL "MANNY" REAL

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 16, 2014*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Probation Officer Manuel "Manny" Real on the occasion of his retirement from the County of Monterey. On December 12,

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