

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING JOE W. STRICKLAND ON
HIS RETIREMENT AS CHIEF
REPORTER OF DEBATES

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 2, 2015

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Joe W. Strickland, the Chief Reporter of Debates, for his contributions to the House of Representatives during almost 22 years of service.

The House has employed Official Reporters of Debates since 1873, when the Speaker of the House took control of the privately-run Congressional Globe and the verbatim proceedings of events were published as the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—as they still are today.

It was a five-man operation back then, and the Reporters were praised in the New York Tribune for their “intimate knowledge of the precedents and practice of the House, and of the national events, great and small, which have passed in close review before their eyes.”

Joe follows in that long tradition, noted in the Tribune, of “superior ability” and “efficiency,” though the office is now under the supervision of the Clerk of the House and has grown to 43 people. Joe has worked diligently to achieve the daunting task of maintaining an accurate record not only of House Floor proceedings but of House Committee work, as well. In addition to his managerial responsibilities, he has been front and center, reporting seven State of the Union speeches and several Joint Meetings to receive messages from foreign heads of state, such as Afghan President Hamid Karzai and French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

Joe was born in central Texas and graduated from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene with a degree in music. A tenor, he regularly toured with an all-male quartet and performed at conventions and competitions from Moscow to Washington, DC, including engagements at the White House.

After college, Joe co-owned a travel and tour company and pursued several other passions before turning his sights on court reporting. Joe attended court reporting school outside of Dallas, and he quickly earned a position as a real-time captionist for a television station. A mere three years later, his skills won him a place as an Official Reporter of Debates for the U.S. House of Representatives, reporting both Committee and Floor debates. The Clerk of the House promoted Joe to Deputy Chief of the office in 2000, and he became Chief Reporter of Debates in 2005.

Joe is recognized by the National Court Reporters Association as a Registered Professional Reporter, a Certified Realtime Reporter, and a Certified Communication Access Realtime Translation provider—qualifications that place him among the elite in court reporting.

Mr. Speaker, the work of the Official Reporters of Debates has been an essential part of House operations for more than 140 years, and while the technology has changed, the dedication of the Reporters, like Joe, has not. We are sad to lose such a valuable member of the House Clerk's team, but we wish him and his family the very best during a long and happy retirement.

THE SAVANNAH HARBOR EXPANSION PROJECT

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 2, 2015

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule today. The underlying bill holds the line on spending, reducing it below the level of the past two years. Furthermore, this bill provides short term funding for the Department of Homeland Security and sets up an opportunity for the new Congress and Senate to repeal President Obama's unconstitutional executive order on immigration. It also holds the line on Obamacare and prohibits taxpayer bailouts of insurance companies. In addition to these things, there are a number of conservative measures I support and I want to focus on one in particular of local importance.

This bill clarifies that the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project is an ongoing construction, not a new start. Therefore, the Office of Management and Budget can and should fully support the project in the President's Budget. We can almost immediately begin dredging.

In 1997, through the Energy and Water Appropriations Committee, we allocated funds to support a study by the Georgia Ports Authority. That same year, the Georgia Ports Authority began a feasibility study of the project.

In 1998, the Harbor Expansion Feasibility Study Report was released, underscoring the importance of the project. Senator Cleland, Senator Coverdell and I worked with House and Senate Members and Conferees to be sure SHEP was included in WRDA. The bill became known as the WRDA bill of 1999 after it was signed into law by President Clinton. WRDA of 1999 included authorization for SHEP allowing the United States Army Corps of Engineers to release the record of decision, formally beginning the project.

The victory in WRDA never assured smooth sailing. Amidst growing competition from neighboring Charleston, Representative Floyd Spence, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said he would “sink” the project [AP, March 2000]. This began an ongoing battle with our neighbors from South Carolina about the port. Meanwhile, many environmentalists and other groups began to raise objections. In addition, the Fish and Wildlife Service threatened to step away from negotiations. As objections came up, meetings required by WRDA with stakeholders including local Judy Jennings, economic development

interests and federal agencies became an important forum to defuse concerns among all parties and resolve problems. Even with continued discussions, Congress worked with the Clinton Administration to secure additional funding for the project.

In 2001, the Georgia Ports Authority and the United States Army Corps of Engineers issued a Memorandum of Understanding and announced that the Port of Savannah was a top ranked port and one of the fastest growing U.S. container ports. Funding was again increased that year, with additional funding secured over the President's budget request.

In 2002, the SHEP Project Management plan was released and the United States Army Corps of Engineers expressed their intent to draft another Environmental Impact Study.

In 2004, the major commitment by Georgia, both financially and politically, unified our message in Washington and was instrumental in moving the project up the priority list.

Further advancing the importance of this project was the approval of the Panama Canal expansion referendum in 2006. For example, in 2007, the Georgia House of Representatives passed H.R. 56 urging the Corps and the U.S. Congress to begin a study of the costs and effects of adding to the storage capacities of all Corps reservoirs in Georgia. Additionally, business groups, led by the Savannah Chamber of Commerce, ran efforts to push the project forward.

In 2008, as new WRDA legislation was debated in Congress, we again kept the project in WRDA and made sure that no amendments were allowed to adversely impact the project.

In 2009, we worked through the appropriations process to ensure funding for the Savannah Harbor Expansion Study in fiscal year 2010. Unfortunately, because so much time had lapsed and costs had increased, the project had to be reauthorized and adjusted each year.

In 2010, President Obama came to Savannah. Congressman BARROW and I had the opportunity to fly in Air Force One with him to discuss the project and followed up with a letter. He acted favorably but did not include it in the budget.

In 2011, even though the President's 2012 budget did not include an allotted budget for SHEP, the Director of the Executive Office of the President's Office of Management and Budget expressed the President's willingness to consider the project. That same year, the U.S. Transportation Secretary noted the economic importance of the port and the need to provide funding. SHEP faced a hurdle when the Corps' Water Qualification Certification was denied by South Carolina's Department of Health and Environmental Control. However, by the end of the year, construction funds were secured for the project.

In 2012, Senator ISAKSON, Senator CHAMBLISS and I met with Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Darcy and presented a letter asking for supportive language. This led to President Obama listing the Port of Savannah as a “We Can't Wait” port and a legislative fix

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

to a procedural hurdle to the beginning of the project through the appropriations process.

In 2013, we again asked for supportive legislative language, held delegation wide meetings and secured a provision in WRDA to reauthorize the project at updated funding levels, removing any question that the project would move forward.

This year, through work with WRDA Conferees and the Appropriations Committee, SHEP finally received the final budgetary and legislative actions necessary to move forward after all of these years in the WRRDA of 2014 and the Omnibus Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2015.

These actions, in addition to many others, were completed to support SHEP because it is crucial to the State of Georgia and the Port of Savannah is key to maintaining our nation's international competitiveness. The Port of Savannah's return on investment is approximately an impressive 5.5:1. As the nation's fourth largest container port, it is critically important that the harbor is deepened to ensure it continues to act as a gateway for business to Georgia and to the nation. Beyond the trade benefits, the Port of Savannah supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and contributes billions in revenue and state and local taxes each year. Serving companies located in all 50 states, Georgia's deep-water ports are strong economic engines for the entire United States.

This has been a long fight that I am proud to have been a part of. I am hopeful with the current status of the project. Again, it was a major team effort where the entire delegation, the business community, the state legislature and several governors supported the project.

RECOGNIZING MR. BRUCE ROLAND
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CAO

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 2, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Bruce Roland, of Clifton, Va., on the occasion of his retirement today, January 2, 2015, after more than 29 years of invaluable service to the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Roland began his career with the House in December 1985, after working six years in the private sector. He was hired by former Clerk of the House, Ben Guthrie, as a Service Coordinator for Property Supply. Mr. Roland was responsible for initiating service and delivery orders and managing event setups.

He progressed to become the Assistant Purchasing Manager for the Operations Support Center, which offered an opportunity to learn new skills. Eventually, his tasks evolved into managing the budget and advocating for the financial needs of the Logistics & Support Office.

During the span of his career, Mr. Roland worked for the Directors of Non-Legislative and Financial Services including General Leonard Wischart and Randall Medlock. When that position was renamed the Chief Administrative Officer, he worked under Scott Faulkner, Jeff Trandahl, Jay Eagen, Dan Beard, Dan Strodel and the current CAO, Ed Cassidy.

For many years, he worked directly under Cosmo Quattrone and Tom Van Dyke in the Furnishings Department, lending his expertise in purchase orders, and acquiring items for the House. It soon became clear that he was proficient in budget and finance, so he took that task on full-time. Eventually, he became the Budget Point of Contact for the Logistics & Support Department, working closely with Deputy CAO, Walt Edwards and Chief Logistics Officer, Jerry Bennett.

Had Mr. Roland not worked for the House, he might have tried to become a professional golfer. He is an accomplished golfer and often played on teams fielded by the CAO for charity events. Mr. Roland says he now intends to enjoy a little more golf while balancing his responsibilities for his three children, his daughter, Antoinette, who is now in college, and twin boys, Robert and Anthony, following the passing of his wife, Marguerite, in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Bruce Roland for his distinguished service and tremendous contributions to the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Roland's duties, like those of all his colleagues within the CAO, are vital to helping make sure we are able to perform our duties as the elected representatives of our communities and the nation. I want to thank Mr. Roland for his commitment to public service, and I wish him and his family all the best as they begin this new chapter of their lives.

CHEMICAL FACILITY ANTI-TERRORISM STANDARDS PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, since before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, experts have been concerned about the vulnerability of chemical plants to attack. These facilities hold large stores of industrial chemicals which pose a safety and security risk to the American people if they are released or detonated. A recent report found that more than 134 million Americans live in the vulnerability zones around chemical facilities. I have such a facility in my district, which is a very serious concern for the surrounding community.

These risks have not been adequately addressed, and this bill falls short of what is needed. The version of the bill before us now also includes a significant and unvetted change to the program that could make many high risk chemical facilities less secure. The self-certification provisions have not been evaluated in hearings or piloted. I am concerned about these provisions and I caution my colleagues that their implementation will require close oversight from Congress.

But this bill is a step forward. For far too long, this important program has been authorized in the appropriations process for the Department of Homeland Security. During last year's government shutdown, the authority for this program lapsed. Looking ahead to next Congress, the risk of another lapse is too great. When we voted on a previous version

of this bill in July, I expressed my hope that the Senate could improve the legislation to strengthen this important program.

On some issues, the Senate was successful. The bill now includes an expanded role for workers and labor unions in developing site security plans and some important whistleblower protections.

However, this bill would leave significant problems in the underlying program in place.

The Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards program at the Department of Homeland Security has not been successful. The original rider that created the program blocked effective enforcement, leading to a lack of compliance. We saw the dangers of noncompliance when the West Fertilizer Company facility in West, Texas, exploded. Unfortunately, those limitations on enforcement would be preserved by this bill.

The original statute blocked the Department from requiring measures to reduce the consequences of a terrorist attack, and in the process created serious obstacles to disapproving site security plans that failed to meet the program's standards. This led to an approval process so complicated that it took more than five years for the Department to complete its review of the first facility. This bill preserves those obstacles.

Both of these challenges may be complicated further by the new self-certification program.

I expect this bill to pass today, and I welcome this step forward. But I call upon all of my colleagues who will be here in the next Congress to continue the important oversight of this program to provide the American people with the protection they expect and deserve.

INSULAR AREAS AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose this omnibus. It is critical to avoid another unnecessary and wasteful government shutdown, and I strongly believe that we must do that without extraneous and harmful policy riders.

The bill before us holds government operations hostage to a number of highly partisan, noxious policy riders. By proposing to repeal the so-called "swaps push out rule" enacted under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform law, it caters to the demands of big banks and puts taxpayers on the hook for their risky decisions. It allows special interests to funnel more money into Congressional political party committees, dramatically increasing the limit from \$129,600 to \$777,600 per year, or over \$1.5 million per election cycle. Putting these provisions together will simply breed additional public cynicism about Congress granting special favors to powerful special interests in exchange for increased political contributions.

I also continue to oppose riders related to Guantanamo and those that meddle in the local business of the District of Columbia.

The fact that this bill only funds the Department of Homeland Security through February

is nothing more than a political stunt by my colleagues across the aisle. Instead of working to fix our broken immigration system, House Republicans have signaled that they are willing to shut down the Department of Homeland Security even though this will do nothing to prevent President Obama from expanding the deferred action program.

This bill also provides \$5 billion in funding for the deployment of an additional 1,500 American troops to Iraq and up to \$500 million to train and equip the so-called “moderate” Syrian rebels. As I outlined in my statement on the NDAA, Congress should have had the opportunity to amend those provision. I do not want us to be dragged into Iraq War 2.0 or more deeply into the Syrian civil war.

Without the inclusion of these measures, I would have been pleased to support a number of provisions in this bill. As a representative of many federal employees, I appreciate the one percent COLA for our dedicated federal workforce and pay adjustments for wage grade employees.

I support the additional funding for the National Institutes of Health, although we must do much more to support medical research. The bill also increases funding the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and provides emergency funding to address the ongoing Ebola crisis. It includes important funding for scientific research at NIST and the National Science Foundation, and rejects the House-passed rider that would have defunded climate change research. I support the investments in education, including Title I and IDEA, although more funding for these programs is necessary to support our nation's students.

The bill also includes critical funding for infrastructure, including \$2.1 billion to build new transit lines, \$500 million for TIGER grants for projects of national significance, and \$150 million to allow the Washington area Metro system to make recommended safety and performance improvements.

This legislation also builds on efforts made in last year's MilCon-VA bill to end the claims backlog that continues to plague our VA regional offices, including the VA's Baltimore

Regional Office. It includes \$2.5 billion for the costs of processing disability claims—an increase of \$40 million over the President's request and \$69 million over last year's level.

I am pleased that this bill provides \$73 million in funding for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. This will help provide Maryland with the necessary resources to implement the technology to automate criminal history and mental health records in our background check system. This legislation also fully funds many other important Department of Justice Programs, including \$376 million for Byrne Justice Assistance Grants and \$430 million for Violence Against Women programs.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that no bill of this magnitude is perfect. However, I cannot in good conscience vote to roll back critical taxpayer protections and allow monied special interests to buy more influence in Congress. We should strip these damaging provisions from the bill and pass an omnibus that works on behalf of taxpayers and strengthens the middle class.