

COMMENDING THE CITIZENS' COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE FBI

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 26, 2015*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to recognize the efforts of eight individuals whose actions in 1971 helped uncover the illegal actions by some working on behalf of our own government to suppress the civil rights of many of our citizens. These eight individuals were members of a group who called themselves the Citizens' Commission to Investigate the FBI (the "Citizens' Commission"). The Citizens' Commission was responsible for obtaining documents from the Media, Pennsylvania office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that helped prompt the national debate about the intelligence community's domestic surveillance programs. The ensuing discussion ultimately led to the first congressional investigations of all intelligence agencies and to the establishment of the first congressional intelligence oversight committees.

We know the names of six of these individuals: William C. Davidon, Keith Forsyth, Bonnie Raines, John C. Raines, Robert Williamson, and Judi Feingold. Two members of the Citizens' Commission whose actions are equally commendable and contributed just as significantly to the cause and legacy of the Citizens' Commission have chosen to remain in anonymity.

On the evening of March 8, 1971, the members of the Citizens' Commission entered the satellite office of the FBI in Media, Pennsylvania, and left having taken nearly all of the documents they found within the office. In the following months, the members of the Citizens' Commission repeatedly mailed to reporters at several news publications documents detailing the contours of our intelligence agencies' programs that spied on American citizens and the vast length to which our civil rights had been violated for decades in the name of J. Edgar Hoover's desire to quell political dissent. These programs included COINTELPRO, or Counter Intelligence Program, a series of covert and often illegal programs conducted by the FBI targeted at disrupting domestic political organizations. It has been said that the intent of COINTELPRO was to accomplish its goals by destroying lives and ruining reputations.

The revelations made by the Citizens' Commission sparked a national debate concerning these programs as well as the importance of civil and privacy rights to all Americans. The news reports generated by the documents that had been made public helped form the basis for creation of the congressional committees that investigated intelligence agencies in 1975. Hearings held by the Senate committee, known as the Church Committee for its chairman, the late Senator Frank Church of Idaho, revealed the wide scope and impact of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI on American life throughout his nearly half century as director of the Bureau. Testimony before the committee revealed that he had secretly used his power to destroy individuals and organizations whose opinions and purposes he disliked. He secretly punished civil rights and antiwar activists and also average Americans who expressed their

dissent in letters to newspapers or by participating in demonstrations. In the Bureau's harassment operations—as opposed to law enforcement or intelligence gathering—officials of the FBI secretly operated as prosecutor, judge and jury against people Hoover regarded as subversive. Thousands of people in government and education lost their jobs as a result of unverified files created by FBI informers that were used against people who were not permitted to face their accusers.

From the beginning of the Vietnam war, Hoover made himself the watchdog of dissent against the war—dissent by average Americans as well as Members of Congress who questioned war policy. In August 1964, when only two senators, Senator Ernest Gruening, Democrat from Alaska, and Senator Wayne Morse, Democrat from Oregon, opposed the Vietnam War authorization legislation—known as the Gulf of Tonkin resolution—the FBI director regarded their votes as subversive. Agents collected the names, and started files on people who sent telegrams to Senator Morse expressing support for his stand against the authorization bill. Two years after the resolution was passed, when Senator J. William Fulbright, Democrat from Arkansas, convened hearings to assess the progress of the war, Hoover placed Fulbright under surveillance to determine if he was a communist or dupe of communists.

The Church Committee's extensive final report stated:

"Many of the techniques used would be intolerable in a democratic society even if all the targets had been involved in violent activity, but COINTELPRO went far beyond that. The unexpressed major premise of the programs was that a law enforcement agency has the duty to do whatever is necessary to combat perceived threats to the existing social and political order."

The Church Committee further concluded, "Too many people have been spied upon by too many government agencies, and too much information has been collected."

As a result of the actions of the Citizens' Commission, the resulting national discussion about these issues led to important changes to our government's domestic surveillance operations. The FBI's policies and practices were evaluated and reformed with respect to how the agency addressed domestic security threats, and the Department of Justice instituted investigative guidelines on domestic intelligence gathering.

Because of the important contribution the Citizens' Commission made to the public awareness and debate concerning domestic surveillance, national security, civil rights, and privacy, these eight individuals deserve our recognition as some of them have recently made their identity known. The identities of six of them and the impact of their non-violent act of resistance recently became known in the documentary film 1971, directed by Johanna Hamilton, and in the book *The Burglary: The Discovery of J. Edgar Hoover's Secret FBI*, written by Betty Medsger.

While we continue to discuss the proper use of domestic surveillance techniques today, particularly as technology evolves in ways that could not have been foreseen during the 1970s, we must remain vigilant to abuses of power, even if done with the stated goal of protecting the public. May we strengthen our resolve to protect the rights these individuals

cherished and helped preserve over forty years ago.

HONORING AUSTIN HERNANDEZ

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 26, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Austin Hernandez attends Foster High School in Richmond, Texas. The essay topic is: select an important event that has occurred in the past 15 years and explain how that event has changed our country.

THE STEPPING STONE TO DESIGNER BABIES.

Imagine a world in which a couple could choose the gender of their baby. There would be no more suspense about the baby's gender. Before conception, people would know and would be able to give themselves adequate time to prepare for the arrival of their new bundle of joy. Well, this is a process that actually exists; it's called gender selection. On May 31st, 2012 The U.S. House of Representatives voted on whether or not to pass a national Ban on the use of abortion to eliminate an unborn child because of an undesired sex. This fast track procedure was not passed, but still has hope. If it were passed then the gender selection could be promoted and this reoccurring problem would not exist. Over the Past decade Gender selection has become a common practice used by many couples around the world.

The world today is not perfect, and neither are its people. Heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's, and many other diseases run rampant in children, and one can't really prevent it. But what if it were preventable? With gender selection, this is possible. According to the Center for Human Reproduction (CHR), "In some cases, the so-called "sex-linked diseases" are inherited via the mother but only male offspring are affected (muscular dystrophy, hemophilia, etc.)." For example, because hemophilia only affects males, a woman with hemophilia has the disease but it does not affect her. However if she were to become pregnant with a boy, the disease would then affect him. With gender selection she would be able to save her baby boy from a life of problems. This process has led to fewer abortions and increased the health of children, which in turn could virtually increase the life expectancy of the U.S.

There are not only health reasons, but also psychological reasons for gender selection. The CHR states that "a single female may feel better equipped having a daughter than a son; parents who lost a child may feel a strong need for a child of the same gender." If one were a single parent, wouldn't they feel better with a child of the same gender? They also claim that parent's whose children have passed away, may have the desire for another child of the same gender. In fact,

many parents are deciding upon this option as a way to help them move on and assist with the grieving process.

Another negative effect of gender selection is the opening of new doors and new possibilities when choosing a gender. How far could it go? Maybe as far as choosing hair color, eye color, intelligence, height, and ability, who knows? People will do anything for perfection. This is basically "commodifying children", says Gender Selection of Babies, and this could lead to a whole revolution in baby making. People wouldn't be unique anymore; the natural process of development would become obsolete. The unforeseen repercussions of gender selection could further harm society.

Gender selection, although it can be helpful, has more negative effects than positive and should not be a decision made lightly. Gender Selection has made the country think having a baby in a different way. Now for many having a child could turn into some sort of shopping spree for the newest and best item/baby. However, this process has helped Americans and many others around the world choose the sex they want. Not only has it also allowed families, who didn't believe it was possible, to have children but it has also given them the choice to save a life and chose what they want. Gender selection has changed America, and will continue to help stop the abortion of unwanted children.

#### A TRIBUTE TO MANDI MCREYNOLDS

#### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Mandi McReynolds for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, *Business Record*.

Since 2000, *Business Record* has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Mandi has the determination and drive to be successful in all that she does, and her exemplary work with Drake University is a testament to that. As the Director of Community Engagement and Service Learning, Mandi is passionate about going the extra mile. In all aspects of her life Mandi's example of hard work and service makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Mandi in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Mandi on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at *Business Record* for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING MR. DONALD GREEN

#### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. Donald Green.

A Coahoma County native, Donald Green is a dedicated and seemingly tireless community leader and business owner who has committed his career to creating economic and educational opportunities for farmworkers and families in the Mississippi Delta.

As Executive Director of Mississippi Delta Council for Farm Worker Opportunities, Inc., Mr. Green leads a staff of 22 providing job training and placement services to thousands of individuals every year. His organization also hosts a monthly food distribution and offers a civilian relief distribution staging area following weather emergencies and disasters. Currently, his team is transforming an existing warehouse and property into a farmers market, commercial kitchen, produce aggregation and food hub to raise incomes for dozens of limited-resource and beginning farmers. Prior to becoming the organization's chief executive, he was its Chief Financial Officer for 21 years.

He served as one of three Associate Tax Commissioners for the State of Mississippi and is the second African American in the State of Mississippi to do so. An accountant, Mr. Green also owns and operates an independent accounting service business.

Throughout his career, Mr. Green has been an ambassador between working people and local businesses. His board service includes: Clarksdale/Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce; member of National Exchange Club; member of Clarksdale Industrial Foundation; member of Coahoma Community Development Organization; and member of Clarksdale/Coahoma County Airport Board. He has served as a State Treasurer of the Magnolia Council; Vice President of The Delta Council; member, Delta State Alumni University Association; former President of National Alumni Association; Founder and former President for Mississippi Delta Strategic Compact; Treasurer for Mississippi Blues Foundation; former President of Friendship Community Federal Credit Union. He was recognized in 2004 as Delta Regional Minority Businessman of the Year, inducted into the Delta State University Alumni Hall of Fame in 2009, and received the Freedom Team Appreciation Certificate for Services to Members of the Armed Forces. He is a member of the Clarksdale Rotary Club.

Committed to making higher education more accessible, Mr. Green became president of Delta State National Alumni Association in 1995 and led a five million dollar capital campaign. That funding has more than doubled in the years since and has a significant endowment. He has served on the university's foundation board. In 2001, he was appointed to a six-year term on the Mississippi State Board of Community and Junior Colleges. He is co-Founder and President of the Ronald Hoss Bennett Foundation, which awards college scholarships to football players from local high schools.

He is known to be a steady, hardworking leader in efforts to increase understanding and build relationships in social and economic di-

versity. Mr. Green helped negotiate the partnership between Delta State University and Coahoma Community College to purchase the Cutrer Mansion, which has evolved into a continuing education center for history, culture, and the arts. In 2014, he worked with the City of Clarksdale officials, business owners, and community activists to honor the life and work of civil rights leader Aaron Henry with a historical marker on the Mississippi Freedom Trail. He has served on the board of Clarksdale-Coahoma County Library and supports the Delta Blues Museum.

The son of sharecroppers Mr. Sylvester and Aree Green, Mr. Green grew up operating farm equipment in Coahoma County, Mississippi. A graduate of Coahoma Agriculture High School, he earned college degrees from Coahoma Community College and Delta State University. Mr. Green is the first African American to serve as President of Delta State University National Alumni Association.

He and his wife, Nelia, have two sons: Donald, Jr., a biomedical engineer living in Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Adam, a high school student, who participated in Youth Leadership Clarksdale and who is currently a freshman at Delta State University majoring in commercial design.

Mr. Green is Chairman of the Deacon Board and Chairman of the Building Fund at New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Jonestown, Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing Entrepreneur and Economic Developer that has been instrumental in magnifying strides of America's black history.

#### TRIBUTE TO BRAD ROBBINS

#### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Corona and Riverside County at large are exceptional. Corona has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent to make their communities a better place to live and work. Brad Robbins is one of these individuals. On April 15, 2015, Brad will be honored for his dedicated service as he ends his tenure as the City of Corona's City Manager.

Brad has worked on behalf of the City of Corona since 1988 and has established himself as a highly regarded leader and active member of the community. Throughout his twenty-eight years of service with the City of Corona, Brad has held a variety of titles including the Department of Water and Power General Manager, Assistant City Manager-Community Development Director, Director of Planning and Assistant City Manager. Due to his success in all of these roles, Brad was then appointed as City Manager in August of 2008. Acting as such, Brad enforced the city ordinances and carried out the policies of the Council through the control and direction of City Departments. During the past seven years, not only did Brad productively navigate the economic recession and the impact on the