

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

STOP SETTLEMENT SLUSH FUNDS ACT OF 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5063) to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes:

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to this bill. I offered an amendment to rename it Another Wall Street Request to Avoid Accountability for Fraud. But, my amendment for a more accurate title was not accepted.

Today, the majority wants to defund the organizations and attorneys that help people have a fighting chance against deep-pocketed multi-national corporations and banks.

Mr. Speaker, Congress returns after a seven-week district work period. During that time, I held many constituent meetings. Not one person asked me to weaken regulations on hedge fund managers or Wall Street bankers. And yet, Wall Street requests are what the majority prioritized for our first week back.

This bill would defund the network of housing counselors and legal aid attorneys who help homeowners facing foreclosure.

Homeowners who were tricked into buying a home with teaser rates that exploded into unaffordable payments.

Homeowners who deserved a chance to catch up after a missed payment or two but were unable to get a response from their lender.

And homeowners like Alan Schroit. Alan, a retired cancer researcher, visited his rental house in Galveston, Texas. He found the locks had been changed, the electricity shut off and a notice on the door said Bank of America was foreclosing on his home. Alan did not have a mortgage with Bank of America. Alan didn't even have a mortgage. His home was paid off. It took him 30 days to get someone at Bank of America to call him back.

Homeowners like Nilly Mauck who lost all her possessions when a company mistakenly evicted her instead of her neighbor.

Or homeowners like Charlie and Maria Cardoso who bought their retirement home with cash in 2005. While they continued living in their primary home, they rented their retirement home out. Their tenants came home one day to find the house cleared of all the possessions—again by Bank of America.

Nilly, Alan and Charlie and Maria's foreclosures were some of thirteen million between 2006–2010. Far too many of them were fraudulent, people foreclosed on by firms who did not have clear title to the property. A significant number of these foreclosures could have been prevented if the lenders involved had followed the law. The new book, Chain of

Title, by David Dayen reports that across our nation, homeowners who should have received assistance with a loan modification, or allowed to cure a delinquency, instead were hit with outrageous late fines, sold over-priced forced-placed insurance, punished with monthly property inspection and other junk fees. Using robo-signing, their eviction papers were signed by people who had no ownership of the loan.

Congress and the states demanded change. Legal settlements pursued by the Department of Justice, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the banking regulators and the states made sure that people have a fighting chance against deep-pocketed multi-national corporations.

And yes, to correct this massive wrongdoing required that Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, Ally Financial and others pay fines. Some of those fines supported non-profit agencies who knew how to get banks to respond to homeowners and follow the law. The funds supported legal aid attorneys who knew how to ensure the banking doing the eviction actually had a right to the property. When lenders foreclose on the wrong people, or lie about their ownership of a mortgage, there should be consequences.

When we require banks to fund housing counseling and legal aid agencies, we leveled the playing field. We realized it was unfair to require each individual person to figure out the unresponsive, complicated and too often predatory home mortgage market on their own.

I oppose gutting initiatives to help homeowners, small business owners and families do battle with global corporations who have defrauded them out of their home or business, polluted their water or land or harmed their health.

Therefore I will oppose H.R. 5063.
I urge my colleagues to do the same.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

SPEECH OF

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2016

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of conservative icon and founder of the Eagle Forum Phyllis Schlafly.

Phyllis Schlafly was a courageous and determined leader who spent her entire adult life fighting for America and our traditional family values. She stood up and spoke up when others did not.

She was a fearless and outspoken defender of the unborn—and a leading voice in protecting America's sovereignty and supporting the U.S. military.

Until her final day on Earth, Phyllis Schlafly fought tirelessly for these commonsense principles and the conservative foundations that

have made America strong. She never stopped exposing the absurdity of the liberal left and the appalling failures of the policies they advocate.

Often referred to as the "First Lady of the Conservative Movement," Phyllis Schlafly's leadership, candor and tenacity was a breath of fresh air—and it will be greatly missed.

While we have lost a powerful voice and advocate for the American people, we can be certain that Phyllis Schlafly's tremendous pride in America and passion for the conservative movement will undoubtedly live on and continue to inspire future conservative leaders for generations to come.

My thoughts and prayers are with the entire Schlafly family during this very difficult time. On behalf of the many Americans she inspired, we say thank you.

INTRODUCING THE IRAQ AND SYRIA GENOCIDE RELIEF AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2016

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce H.R. 5961, the Iraq and Syria Genocide Relief and Accountability Act of 2016. Since ISIS' blitzkrieg across the multi-ethnic and religiously diverse mosaic of eastern Syria and western Iraq in 2014, I have chaired four hearings focused on the implications of this appalling advance for religious and ethnic minorities in those areas. Events in the region and the expert testimony of witnesses quickly revealed that ISIS was not merely focused on territorial conquest—the group was ideologically committed to exterminating ancient religious communities and cleansing its self-proclaimed caliphate of anything but its vicious and fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. Many of my colleagues and I were certain early on that ISIS was committing genocide. We pressed the Administration to formally acknowledge that fact until the Secretary of State did so in March of this year. But the most pressing question issue has always been the lives of those religious minorities right now that face extinction under this tyranny of terror.

The Iraq and Syria Genocide Relief and Accountability Act of 2016 is an answer to the question of what the United States can do to mitigate this suffering, save lives, and build a more sustainable future for Syria and Iraq. The bill tackles this overwhelming challenge on three fronts by directing the Administration to take additional measures to improve the lives of displaced genocide survivors, provide some of them with an additional lifeline to escape their war torn lands, and support efforts that will help preserve the presence of religious minority communities in those areas for years to come.

In a hearing this May that I chaired called "The ISIS Genocide Declaration: What Next?"

• 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.

Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus—who has been a leader in drawing attention to the plight of Christians in this conflict—testified that “Repeatedly we hear from Church leaders in the region that Christians—and other genocide survivors—are last in line for assistance from governments.” We can and must do better. To that end, H.R. 5961 requires the Administration to assess and address the humanitarian vulnerabilities, needs, and triggers to flee, of religious and ethnic communities that were targeted for genocide or otherwise severely persecuted. It directs the Administration to fund entities that are effectively providing assistance to these communities and guarantees that faith-based organizations on the ground are not excluded from U.S. assistance.

One such example is the Chaldean Catholic Archdiocese of Erbil, which provides assistance to internally displaced families of Yazidis, Muslims, and Christians, including food and resettlement from tents to permanent housing, as well as rental assistance, for Yazidis, medical care and education to Yazidis and Muslims through its clinics, schools, and university—which are open to everyone. The Archdiocese provides some form of each of these kinds of assistance to all of the estimated 10,500 internally displaced Christian families in the greater Erbil region. Yet as it provides these critical services, it has not received a single penny from any government. H.R. 5961 is clear that the Administration must be supporting entities, regardless of whether they are faith-based, that are heroically providing assistance to genocide survivors on the ground.

In recognition of the extraordinary suffering of these religious and ethnic communities, and their extraordinary vulnerability to persecution, H.R. 5961 requires the Administration to create a Priority Two, or “P-2,” visa category of special humanitarian concern that would provide one additional avenue for genocide survivors to seek resettlement in the United States through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. It is important to note that this is not a “fast track” to resettlement—P-2 applicants undergo the same security screening as all refugee applicants. But this special category allows them to access an overseas interview wherever the United States interviews refugee applicants, without needing a referral from the UN, an NGO, or a US Embassy, as is usually the case.

This bill also addresses a critical factor that will influence the continued presence of smaller, vulnerable religious communities in Syria and Iraq beyond this conflict: accountability for those who perpetrate heinous crimes against them. H.R. 5961 directs the Administration to prioritize supporting the criminal investigation, prosecution, and conviction of perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. These efforts will be focused on funding and supporting entities that are conducting criminal investigations, building Syrian and Iraqi investigative and judicial capacity, or collecting and preserving evidence for eventual use in domestic courts, hybrid courts, or internationalized domestic courts. Whether they are members of the Assad regime, ISIS, or some of the Popular Mobilization Brigades in Iraq, there can be no impunity for individuals who committed these dreadful crimes.

H.R. 5961 also directs the Administration to identify gaps in our criminal statutes to facilitate the prosecution of American perpetrators,

and non-Americans present in the United States, of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Without accountability, without humanitarian assistance reaching these religious and ethnic communities, we risk losing the invaluable, ancient presence of these communities in these countries altogether. This will feed violent extremism and dim the future of Iraq and Syria.

I urge my House colleagues to support this measure that will deliver immediate assistance to genocide survivors, help prosecute and punish perpetrators, and invest in a sustainable future for these persecuted religious and ethnic communities in the lands in which they have lived for so many generations.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ED MORLAN

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2016

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the retirement of Mr. Ed Morlan of Bayfield, Colorado. Ed has worked tirelessly for decades to grow the economy of Southwest Colorado and provide opportunities for countless families in his community to succeed and prosper.

Ed's life of service started before his work in local economic development when he fought for his country in three tours in Vietnam. For his actions he received a Purple Heart and a Silver Star. Returning from Vietnam, Ed set his sights on making a difference in his community, becoming a town board member of Bayfield, CO, for five terms while also working with the Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado, a nonprofit organization that supports business startups, that has given more than \$19 million to advance growth and opportunity in the region which encompasses five counties and two Indian Reservations.

Through his hard work over 27 years, as Executive Director of Region 9—a fledgling organization with a \$30,000 deficit when Ed took over in 1989. Ed has overseen an expansion of the organization that now boasts an operating budget of close to \$2 million dollars and has for decades been instrumental in the economic health of Southwest Colorado.

The mining industry in Silverton, CO has faced several rounds of layoffs in recent decades. Ed's work with Region 9 has helped to offset many of these negative impacts by creating a thriving environment for small businesses. Through the years, under Ed's direction, Region 9 has assisted businesses from hardware stores, to ski areas, and even an animal hospital.

Mr. Speaker, Ed Morlan is an outstanding citizen of Colorado's Third Congressional District. He embodies the spirit of entrepreneurship and commitment to community that makes this such a special place to live. Without Ed's hard work, many rural businesses would not be thriving today. Although Ed is retiring from Region 9, he plans on continuing to help the community. On behalf of the people of Colorado's Third District I want to thank Ed for his work, and service to his country and community. We wish him the very best in his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING “EDDIE GAEDEL DAY”

HON. DENNY HECK

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2016

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call the attention of my House colleagues to one of the most unusual careers in our national pastime of baseball, one that began and ended with just one trip to the plate at Sportsman's Park in St. Louis on August 19, 1951. In the bottom of the first inning, during the second game of a Sunday afternoon doubleheader against the Detroit Tigers, the St. Louis Browns sent a pinch hitter to the plate, 3'7" Eddie Gaedel, whose 65 pound weight made him the shortest and lightest player in Major League Baseball history.

Wearing the uniform of the Browns nine year old batboy, Eddie drew a walk on four straight pitches from Detroit pitcher Bob Cain, and was replaced by a pinch runner. His one day professional baseball career came to an abrupt halt several days later when American League president Will Harridge voided Gaedel's contract. Nevertheless, his place in baseball history was preserved in the record books as one of the only players to have a perfect 1.000 on base percentage for his entire career. Eddie Gaedel's autograph is now worth more than Babe Ruth's, and the bat he used in the game recently sold at auction for over fifty thousand dollars.

St. Louis Browns owner Bill Veeck promised Eddie Gaedel immortality when he signed him to a contract to play for the Browns. In Spokane, WA, an organization works annually to help Eddie achieve the immortality he was promised. Founded in 2011 at O'Doherty Irish Grille and Pub, the Eddie Gaedel Society, Spokane Chapter No. 1 has launched a national campaign to make each August 19th “Eddie Gaedel Fan Appreciation Day” in ballparks everywhere. The club is also seeking Eddie Gaedel's induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame, where his jersey bearing the number 1/8 was displayed for many years before being returned to St. Louis, where it now hangs in the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame and Museum. I am a proud honorary member of that organization.

Several years ago, Spokane Mayor David Condon declared August 19, “Eddie Gaedel Day” and St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay did so this year, the sixty-fifth anniversary of Eddie Gaedel's one day, four pitch baseball career. In addition, the St. Louis Cardinals have made their home game on Friday, September 9, “Eddie Gaedel Bobblehead Night,” and will give away thirty thousand of the miniature statues of baseball's smallest player to fans who attend their home game against the Milwaukee Brewers.

Of particular note is the fact that the St. Louis Browns batboy who literally gave Eddie Gaedel the shirt off his back in August of 1951 so he could go to bat, Bill DeWitt, Jr., is now principal owner of the St. Louis Cardinals. His son, Bill DeWitt III, is the team president. The DeWitt family's involvement in professional baseball in both St. Louis and other cities stretches back over one hundred years. Bill DeWitt, Sr. sold the St. Louis Browns to Bill Veeck only weeks before Eddie came up to bat, and was serving as the team's general manager at the time.