

In tribute to Israel's 69th birthday, I rise today to honor the Jewish people and their long-standing struggle to build and expand their country.

Many of the Jews who lived in Israel in 1948 were survivors of the Second World War and the Holocaust, which pushed international opinion for the need for a homeland for the Jewish people where they could be free from persecution and free to build a better life.

Since that fateful day in Tel Aviv, Israel and its people have worked tirelessly to build a thriving democracy that is economically prosperous and at peace with neighboring nations.

Today, 69 years later, after many difficulties and hardships, a strong, resolute Israel has a population over 8 million.

The first nation to recognize Israel's independence, I am proud to say, was the United States, when Democratic President Harry Truman welcomed Israel into the community of nations just hours after its declaration.

The bonds between our two great nations, bound together by common interests and shared values, have only grown with time.

Through Democratic and Republican Administrations, we have continued to stand by our ally in the Middle East.

As most people know, I have been a long-time supporter of Israel and continue to advocate on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I hope on this joyous celebration that we reflect on the need to redouble our efforts to bring peace to the region and continue to tangibly support our friend and ally in its request for peace.

HONORING PATSY CLINE

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, there are those whose lives shine so brightly and give us hope regardless of life circumstances and tragedies we may endure. Patsy Cline, who was also known as the First Lady of Country Music, was one of those inspiring and uplifting souls. She moved us all by her incredible voice and meaningful lyrics such as Crazy and Walking after Midnight that would continue to be cherished by generations to follow.

Patsy was a true treasure whose memory will forever be remembered by her fans and Tennesseans alike. Patsy Cline was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame, and was the first female soloist chosen for the honor. Her short yet remarkable music and television career paved a way for women to pursue their passion in the entertainment industry. The true strength she exemplified came from the genuine love in her heart to serve and entertain her family, friends, and fans. She lived a life worth living.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EMERGENCY FINANCIAL MANAGER REFORM ACT OF 2017

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the Emergency Financial Manager Reform Act of 2017

is intended to ensure that state-appointed emergency financial managers for municipalities in fiscal distress do not violate Constitutional protections, ensure public health and safety, and are accountable stewards of taxpayer funds. The bill responds to problems presented when unaccountable emergency financial managers usurp local elected officials and unilaterally make decisions that jeopardize public health and safety.

The bill accomplishes these objectives by authorizing the U.S. Attorney General to withhold ten percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to a state under the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program (Byrne-JAG), which provides funding to states for law enforcement purposes, if the U.S. Attorney General determines that the state appointed an emergency financial manager who fails to meet any of the criteria as specified in the bill. These criteria, for example, include a requirement that the appropriate state official submit a certification to the U.S. Attorney General stating that the appointment of an emergency financial manager has neither the purpose nor the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color. Another condition specifies that the emergency financial manager receive prior approval from the governor of the state and the appropriate local elected officials before making decisions affecting public health or safety. A further condition protects the rights of employees under collective bargaining agreements from being impaired in violation of the U.S. Constitution.

SECTION-BY-SECTION EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

Section 1. Short Title. Section 1 sets forth the short title of the bill as the Emergency Financial Manager Reform Act of 2017.

Section 2. Findings. Section 2 of the bill sets forth a series of congressional findings explaining why this legislation is necessary.

Section 3. Safeguards Regarding State Appointment of an Emergency Financial Manager. Subsection (a) of section 3 authorizes the U.S. Attorney General to withhold ten percent of funds that would otherwise be allocated to a state under the Byrne-JAG grant program for the following fiscal year if the state has appointed an emergency financial manager and any of the following criteria are not met:

(1) The emergency financial manager is appointed and the chief legal officer or other appropriate state official has not prior thereto submitted a certification to the U.S. Attorney General that such appointment has neither the purpose nor the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color and the U.S. Attorney General has not interposed an objection within 60 days following the submission of such certification.

(2) The emergency financial manager is authorized to make decisions affecting public health or safety of the residents of a local government unit without receiving prior approval from the governor of the state and the appropriate local elected officials.

(3) The emergency financial manager fails to have adequate oversight to ensure against conflicts of interest, mismanagement, and abuse of discretion by the emergency financial manager. The bill, in section 4, defines adequate oversight to mean that a monthly, publically-available report accounting for all financial activities of the emergency financial manager, including possible conflicts of interest, mismanagement, and abuses of discretion. This report must be reviewed and approved by the governor. In addition, adequate oversight means that there must be an

independent, state-approved, and publically-available annual audit of the emergency financial manager's duty-related activities.

(4) The emergency financial manager is authorized to reject, modify, or terminate an existing collective bargaining agreement without mutual consent of all parties to such agreement.

(5) The emergency financial manager is authorized to reject, modify, or terminate an existing contract without mutual consent of all parties to such contract or such rejection, modification, or termination is approved by a federal bankruptcy court.

Subsection (b) provides that the amount of funding not allocated under subsection (a) is to be reallocated to other states that are not subject to any reduction under subsection (a).

Section 4. Definitions. Section 4 defines various terms used in the bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. SPENCER'S 3RD GRADE CLASS

HON. DAVID A. TROTT

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the bright young artists in Ms. Spencer's 3rd grade class at Auburn Elementary in Auburn Hills, Michigan.

I know that artists get their start long before high school and college, learning to expand their imagination and foster their creativity in classrooms just like Ms. Spencer's.

In an effort to highlight young artists from across Michigan's 11th Congressional District, this year, I announced the 1st Annual "Color my Capitol" Program.

Brimming with talent, Ms. Spencer's students were eager to showcase their amazing artistic skills and take part in this one-of-a-kind program.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Spencer's 3rd graders did not disappoint. Their creations are unique, innovative, and imaginative. Their colorful artwork embodies our country's bright and promising future with these sharp young minds leading the way.

It is my utmost honor to have their artwork displayed in my Congressional district office in Troy, Michigan for everyone who visits to enjoy. Each and every time I walk into my office, I am reminded of their talent.

Congratulations to Ms. Spencer and the young artists she has the pleasure of teaching.

IN TRIBUTE TO SHEILA DIANNE COCHRAN

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sheila Dianne Cochran, Milwaukee Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer and Chief Operating Officer. She began service at the Council in March of 2009 and officially retired on March 31, 2017.

Ms. Cochran ran the largest Central Labor Council in Wisconsin. The Milwaukee Area Labor Council has about 110 affiliate Labor

Unions and represents approximately 25,000 members. The council has two divisions; the Council and Field Mobilization Department. Sheila was responsible for supervising six staff, running the day-to-day operation with oversight of all records and managing the financial operation that included a budget of approximately \$600,000 dollars. Further, under separate authority, the Milwaukee Area Labor Council houses The Labor Community @ Work a nonprofit, 501c3 charity organization that helps those in need. Some of the services provided under the auspices of The Labor Community @ Work include: operate food drives for Pathfinders, collect toiletries for the Health and Hygiene Drive for the Homeless, construction of "little libraries", cooks for the St. Ben's Community Meal grill out BBQ dinner, and provides funds for Laborfest and Wisconsin Election Protection. Sheila Cochran sits on the non-profit board The Labor Community @ Work as an at large member.

Sheila was hired at Delphi /Delco/E&S in 1979; she began her work in the labor movement while employed there in 1989, when she was elected as Recording Secretary of UAW, Local 438. In 1999, she was elected to the then Milwaukee County Labor Council. The Milwaukee Area Labor Council was formed in 2008 when it merged the Milwaukee, Ozaukee and Washington County Labor Councils.

Sheila has served on numerous boards, commissions, and councils over the years including: The Fair Lending Coalition, WTRP/BIG STEP Board; Member Milwaukee Area Technical College Board of Directors, National Board of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Chair of Wisconsin Election Protection, and Elected Member United Way Board of Greater Milwaukee. In fact, she holds the position of the longest-serving member of the area United Way Board of Greater Milwaukee.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to know and work with Sheila for over 25 years. She has provided invaluable counsel and advice over the years. I am so pleased to be able to join with friends and colleagues at her retirement dinner celebration on May 19, 2017, where she has asked that all the proceeds from the dinner are to be donated to The Labor Community @ Work. I wish her much success as she transitions into a different phase of her life. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Sheila and I am proud to call her friend. The citizens of the Fourth Congressional District and the State of Wisconsin are privileged to have someone of her ability and dedicated service working on their behalf for so many years. I am honored for these reasons to pay tribute to Sheila Cochran.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RATIFICATION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH AMENDMENT

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, May 5th marks the 25th Anniversary of the ratification of the Twenty-Seventh Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The Twenty-Seventh Amendment guarantees that the Members of Congress may not adjust their current salaries, and that any changes in pay

will not take effect until the next session of Congress. James Madison originally proposed this amendment in 1789. However, it would take 202 years for this amendment to be ratified by the states. Gregory Watson, a constituent of the 21st District of Texas, helped restart the push for ratification in 1982. Mr. Watson's involvement helped to ratify the amendment on May 5, 1992. This anniversary marks an important day for the nation and for Mr. Watson. His efforts exemplify superb civic duty and should inspire other to become active in our government. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing May 5th as the Anniversary of the ratification of the 27th Amendment and Gregory Watson for the important role he played in its ratification.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday May 2, 2017, I was unable to vote on roll call No. 244: Final Passage of H.R. 1180 "Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017." Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

IN HONOR OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT FALLS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 75th Anniversary of the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department in Great Falls, Virginia. Established in 1942 and originally named the Forestville Volunteer Fire Department, the Department formed as an auxiliary to the McLean Fire Department to enhance Virginia's domestic readiness during World War II. The original membership of 29 volunteer firefighters has doubled, and the department now includes paid ranks, operational members, and administrative members, and today is a fixture of the Great Falls community.

Through exemplary leadership, community support, and working in coordination with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department has experienced immense growth since its inception in 1942. Originally, the Department only had a small barn, a single 1942 Chevrolet truck with a 500 gallon tank, and 29 volunteer members. But over the years the department expanded, and in 1961 the department moved to its current location to accommodate the additional firefighters and the overnight staff. After recent renovations, the department reopened their current station in 2011, and this state of the art facility is certified as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold building for its use of green technologies, making it the first of its kind among Fairfax County Government Buildings. The once one-truck department now has five emergency vehicles and was the first Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Station to have four-wheel

drive ambulances. And today there are 22 career firefighters on duty 24/7, and 40 volunteer members, serving in both operational and administrative roles.

In addition to their efforts to keep our community safe, the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department provides support at community events all over Fairfax County, including parades, festivals, and fundraisers, and throughout the years, the Great Falls community and its leaders have offered continuous assistance to the Department.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department for their years of selfless service and heroism and to again congratulate them on this historic milestone. I would like to personally express my gratitude to the men and women who selflessly put themselves in dangerous positions on behalf of their neighbors, friends, and community, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. STEVENSON'S 3RD GRADE CLASS

HON. DAVID A. TROTT

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the bright young artists in Mrs. Stevenson's 3rd grade class at Deerfield Elementary in Novi, Michigan.

I know that artists get their start long before high school and college, learning to expand their imagination and foster their creativity in classrooms just like Mrs. Stevenson's.

In an effort to highlight young artists from across Michigan's 11th Congressional District, this year, I announced the 1st Annual "Color my Capitol" Program.

Brimming with talent, Mrs. Stevenson's students were eager to showcase their amazing artistic skills and take part in this one-of-a-kind program.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Stevenson's 3rd graders did not disappoint. Their creations are unique, innovative, and imaginative. Their colorful artwork embodies our country's bright and promising future with these sharp young minds leading the way.

It is my utmost honor to have their artwork displayed in my Congressional district office in Troy, Michigan for everyone who visits to enjoy. Each and every time I walk into my office, I am reminded of their talent.

Congratulations to Mrs. Stevenson and the young artists she has the pleasure of teaching.

HONORING SEAN MACKIN

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a businessman, a humanitarian, an advocate for Irish American Causes, but most importantly, a dear friend. I have known Sean Mackin for many years and I cherish the friendship he and I have forged over that time. I am honored to be able to recognize his many accomplishments.