

from, pay \$4.49. Really, shipping that gallon of milk to Hawai'i from California is 30 percent of the total cost of the product in Hawai'i?

In 2012, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York studied Puerto Rico's economy and found that "the high cost of shipping is a substantial burden on the Island's productivity." The New York Fed found that, "[i]t costs an estimated \$3,063 to ship a twenty-foot container of household and commercial goods from the East Coast of the United States to Puerto Rico; the same shipment costs \$1,504 to nearby Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) and \$1,687 to Kingston (Jamaica)—destinations that are not subject to Jones Act restrictions." There is only one reason why costs are double to ship from the continental United States to a domestic port in Puerto Rico as compared to foreign ports in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica: there is international competition on the latter routes, none on the domestic route and the shipping companies take full advantage of that lack of competition.

The three bills I introduce today say: enough is enough. If you, the continental U.S., wants to continue the Jones Act as to shipping between your locations, that's your business. But don't penalize us island and other non-contiguous locations by throwing us to the monopoly wolves you've created.

The first bill, the Noncontiguous Shipping Relief Act, exempts all noncontiguous U.S. locations, including Hawai'i, from the Jones Act. The second, the Noncontiguous Shipping Reasonable Rate Act, benchmarks the definition of a "reasonable rate" that Jones Act shipping can charge to within ten percent of analogous international shipping rates. And the third, the Noncontiguous Shipping Competition Act, prevents monopolies or duopolies in noncontiguous Jones Act shipping. Essentially, the bills are intended to lay out options for providing relief for our U.S. noncontiguous areas. We can resolve the issue in many ways, but we must change the status quo which has had such a deep, broad and negative impact on my state and the other jurisdictions beholden to the Jones Act.

The Noncontiguous Shipping Relief Act would allow the noncontiguous jurisdictions to be serviced by non-Jones Act vessels and increase, or in some cases create any, competition in these critical shipping lanes. Again, this is a small portion of the total national Jones Act shipping where it is particularly destructive in application.

Let me address directly the argument offered up by the domestic shippers in defense of the Jones Act: that it contains important labor and environmental protections that would be lost upon repeal. My bill would retain these important protections. Specifically, it provides that all foreign shippers operating under the bill's Jones Act exemptions must comply with the same labor, environmental, tax, documentation, U.S. locus and other laws as are applicable to non-U.S. flag ships and shippers transiting U.S. waters today.

The Noncontiguous Shipping Reasonable Rate Act would define a "reasonable rate" for the noncontiguous domestic ocean trade as no more than ten percent above the rate set by a comparable international rate recognized by the Federal Maritime Commission. Currently, the Surface Transportation Board technically has the authority to adjudicate and set precedent on what a "reasonable rate" is for Jones Act shipping, but it has almost never

been used and never to a clear conclusion on what is a reasonable rate. My bill would define reasonable to remove uncertainty. Current Jones Act shipping rates vary widely and there is no central compilation of these rates. The ten percent benchmark would allow for variance but also ensure that Americans in our noncontiguous areas are not forced to pay exorbitant rates way above shipping rates which would otherwise be provided through international competition were the Jones Act not applicable.

The Noncontiguous Shipping Competition Act would exempt shipping routes to non-contiguous jurisdictions from the Jones Act requirements if a monopoly or duopoly exists on those routes. The Jones Act has resulted in the blossoming of monopolies and duopolies in our noncontiguous jurisdictions. To ensure that these communities, which are the most reliant in the country on shipping to receive necessities, are not held hostage to these dominant companies, my bill would give Jones Act exemptions to routes that are not serviced by at least three companies with separate ownership. In short, if a domestic route is in fact in a competitive environment, the Jones Act is less of a problem, but if there is no competition, then the route should be opened up to international competition by rescinding the Jones Act.

Madam Speaker, these long-overdue bills are of the utmost importance to the localities which have long borne the unfair brunt of the Jones Act. It is often difficult to pierce the veil of longstanding custom and understanding to see the real negative impacts of a law and what should instead be. It is even more difficult to change a law which provides a federally-created and endorsed monopoly under which no competition exists to hold down prices. Yet clearly the time for these measures is overdue. I urge their passage.

CELEBRATION OF NEW GARDEN ENTRANCE, GARDEN ENTRY PA- VILION, & CIRCLE

HON. WILLIAM R. TIMMONS, IV

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2019

Mr. TIMMONS. Madam Speaker, the Hatcher Garden and Woodland Preserve in my district recently celebrated the opening of its new garden entrance, entry pavilion, and circle. The Hatcher Garden and Woodland Preserve originated as the vision of its namesakes, Harold and Josephine Hatcher. The Hatcher's shared a passion for gardening and education. The family gradually expanded beyond their initial small wooded residential lot to ten acres, adding walking paths and trees to rehabilitate the land and reclaim eroded cotton fields. Their zeal inspired many volunteers to join their efforts to develop a gift to the community—a shared garden and woodland preserve for relaxation and information. Their life project was donated to the Spartanburg County Foundation in 1987 to ensure its continuance.

Today, the Hatcher Garden and Woodland Preserve exceeds twelve acres. It is open to the public and free of charge to all visitors, in line with the Hatcher's vision. Outdoor education programs are offered for elementary school children and opportunities are afforded

to more than 60,000 visitors to experience inspiration, enjoyment, and education through nature.

This December, a two-year project was completed at the Garden. The new facilities will enhance the experiences and opportunities enjoyed by visitors of all ages, and will continue to be a source of knowledge and information to the community. I am grateful for the Garden's continued efforts in my district and I look forward to their continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE INAUGURATION OF THE PRINCIPAL AND SECOND CHIEF OF THE ALABAMA- COUSHATTA TRIBE OF TEXAS

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2019

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the inauguration of Herbert Johnson, Sr. and Donnis Battise as Principal Chief and Second Chief, respectively, of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas on January 1, 2020.

Herbert Johnson, Sr., a member of the Beaver Clan, served two terms on the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe Council, and held the position of Tribal Security Director for 21 years until his retirement in 2012. Mr. Johnson was vibrantly active in his community, serving on the Tribe's volunteer fire department and as the manager of the Tribal softball and basketball leagues for numerous years. He attended Jacksonville College, and later earned certification from Kilgore College and the Angelina Criminal Justice Center as an East Texas Police Academy reserve officer. Mr. Johnson is a member of the Indian Presbyterian Church, and has served nearly half a century on the Big Sandy Independent School District Board of Trustees. In all his endeavors, he enjoys the love and support of his wife, Deloris, and he takes great pride in their five children: Davie, Delbert, Retha, Herbert Jr., and Heather, and their five grandchildren: Jackson, Camille, Raegan, Aaliyah, and Stormi.

Donnis Battise, a member of the Bear Clan, has served two terms on the Tribal Council and has been a member of the Tribe's volunteer fire department. During the Vietnam War, Mr. Battise served in the U.S. Army and is active today with the Tribal Veterans Association. Mr. Battise was employed in the lumber and paper industries for 33 years, and more recently retired from his position as a gaming attendant at Naskila Gaming. As a fervent follower of the Indian Presbyterian Church, Donnis serves both as an ordained elder and deacon of the church. He and his wife, Carol, are the guardians of Lilly Ann Alec.

Herbert Johnson, Sr. and Donnis Battise have earned the high esteem of Tribal members through their many years of outstanding service, and it is indeed a pleasure to honor them on this special occasion.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Herbert Johnson, Sr. and Donnis Battise on their inauguration as Principal Chief and Second Chief of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe and I ask that they may be extended sincere best wishes for the future.