

Mr. Speaker, Shirley Heller was both well-loved and widely respected by all those blessed to have known her, especially her husband and three sons, whom she cherished. She selflessly served her community throughout her life's work. Today, Mr. Speaker, we celebrate Shirley's life, which serves as a wonderful example to all who follow in her footsteps.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASTORIA CENTER OF ISRAEL

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of the 75th anniversary of The Astoria Center of Israel, one of the oldest and most venerable Conservative synagogues in my district.

Since its inception in 1926 the Astoria Center of Israel has been a bulwark of the Conservative Jewish community, as it provides a center for civic leadership, spiritual enrichment, and cultural relations.

Mr. Speaker, this congregation has always been a vibrant one.

In May of 1926, Financial, House, Membership, and Junior League committees had been established, a mere month after the building first opened its doors.

Those doors open into a sanctuary that is magnificent to behold even when the services have yet to commence. The beautiful canvasses of Mr. Louis Pierre Rigal, winner of the prestigious Grande Prix de Rome award in 1919, adorn the walls with glorious Biblical imagery.

Even today the synagogue continues to enrich the community's culture and spirit by offering plays, concerts, lectures, and civic meetings to any that wish to attend.

It would be impossible for me to separate the merits of this institution from those of its first spiritual leader, Rabbi Joshua Goldberg.

Rabbi Goldberg was the first Jewish chaplain of the United States Navy. When knowledge of the Holocaust became public, he, together with Rabbi Stephen Wise, was an active leader in the effort to save European Jews from Hitler's relentless persecution.

Rabbi Goldberg was stationed in Europe during World War II, and thus began his distinguished fifty-year-long career of Navy chaplaincy.

As a Rabbi, he reached out to other members of the clergy, both in local neighborhoods and throughout greater New York area. Rabbi Goldberg would often use radio broadcasts as a means of delivering his message of universal love and unity. Additionally, his efforts were integral to the formation of Queens College, my esteemed Alma Mater.

He made great contributions to the establishment of other Jewish communities such as Rego Park and Forest Hills.

Many prominent members of the Astoria Center for Israel continued to follow in Rabbi Goldberg's footsteps, such as Rabbi Alvin Class, the current chaplain of the New York Police Department.

I also must acknowledge the Center's many congregants that proudly pursue active ca-

reers in public service in both the governmental and private sectors.

It is my hope that we can fulfill the clause that concludes the Astoria Congregation of Israel synagogue charter—

"Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity"

RAILROAD RETIREMENT AND SURVIVORS' IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM NUSSLE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I commend the Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for his effort to address the problem of the railroad retirement system's solvency and to improve the benefits of railroad retirees and their surviving spouses. The fundamental problem is that there is currently only one railroad worker for every three beneficiaries, and that ratio is only getting worse. I agree that steps need to be taken to ensure the long term solvency of the railroad retirement system.

However, I must share with my colleagues an important concern regarding this bill's potential impact on the federal budget. As Chairman of the House Budget Committee, I worked with the Committee Chairmen, House Leadership and the Administration to alleviate this same concern, which may have been incorrectly perceived as delaying its consideration on the floor.

This bill raises a technical question about how the government should treat the transfer of financial assets from the railroad retirement account to a new trust fund for the purchase of private securities. Under the existing rules for estimating the cost of legislation, the investment of railroad retirement funds in private securities is considered by the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget as an expenditure and would result in \$15.6 billion in new government spending in fiscal year 2002. This is because the funds would no longer be held or controlled by the U.S. Treasury.

There is another view held by many budget analysts that this transaction should simply be considered a means of financing the federal debt, and not as government spending. In other words, the investment of these assets would be considered a transfer of funds from one part of the federal government to another. Under this view, the investment of these bonds, which are currently in government securities, in private securities would have no net effect on the budget. I believe that this view is not unreasonable if the benefits of any return on investment accrue to a government-administered trust fund; that they are not used to finance new federal spending programs; and the investment decisions are walled off from political considerations or manipulation.

I am, however, opposed to a provision in the bill that directs OMB and CBO to estimate the cost of this bill, not on the basis of what they objectively think it actually costs, but what the Congress thinks it should cost. I do not believe that Congress should arbitrarily substitute its judgment for that of our budget experts.

As I support the overarching goal of restoring solvency to the railroad retirement system, I voted in favor of the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001. Nevertheless, I strongly believe that the bill requires additional work if it is to both serve the important needs of our country's hard working railroad employees and ensure that we maintain a balanced federal budget. Thus, I urge the President and the Congress to continue to work toward producing a final bill that does not tell OMB and CBO how much it costs, and which incorporates provisions that will protect our hard earned budget surplus.

TRIBUTE TO ISAAC HORN, OF THE SAN BERNARDINO CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Isaac Horn, of the San Bernardino City Fire Department, for his selfless bravery in rescuing three fishermen, whose small boat was left adrift in the Pacific Ocean, buffeted by wind gales. Isaac and his colleague, Ben Alexander, demonstrated courage and commitment and the highest duties of their profession, in their off-duty rescue of these individuals in need.

Isaac and Ben were filming whale sharks in October for a television series in Bahia de Los Angeles, a small fishing village about 400 miles south of the Mexican border, when they were approached by a woman frantic about fishermen who were lost. The fishing boat lacked an engine, and had been swept in a wind-tossed sea. Isaac and Ben searched for the boat in their 21-foot craft, while braving a heavy windstorm with winds reaching about 50 to 60 miles per hour.

When they spotted the fishing boat, it was in immediate peril, in danger of being swept onto the treacherous shores of an island. The boat was only 150 yards away from shore. Using a 12-foot line, the firefighters were able to pull the boat to safety, in a courageous effort that took about an hour. In gratitude, the fishermen offered them money, but Isaac and Ben refused.

Mr. Speaker, Isaac is a leading firefighter in our community. He has served as a paramedic firefighter, and because of his great labors and professionalism, has been promoted to the rank of engineer. He is a very dedicated worker, one who always makes sure that citizens come first. If one ever needed a firefighter to pull someone out of a fire, Isaac would be the one. He is extremely strong, brave, and dedicated in his work. He has a sense of fun about him, even though he approaches his duties with great seriousness and duty.

Isaac and Ben's co-workers have nothing but praise for them, describing them as "dedicated," "great workers," "you couldn't find nicer people," "they do an excellent job." Their supervisors are equally laudatory, noting their deep commitment to help other people. It is not surprising that they would go out of their way to help someone when they are off duty.

Mr. Speaker, our fire fighters put themselves in harm's way, time and time again. They are

the line of defense that keeps our communities safe. As a husband, father, and grandparent, I am proud to entrust the safety of my loved ones to such fine individuals. The heroism displayed in Bahia de Los Angeles is the highest example of a calling that exists twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. A firefighter's work is never done, and even off duty, or on vacation, we can rely on these brave individuals to save lives.

Mr. Speaker, many fire fighters toil anonymously, in a quiet and heroic manner. Their loved ones are faced with the prospect of a knock on the door, cap in hand, as they are informed that their spouse, brother, sister, son or daughter has made the ultimate sacrifice in protecting the public. Our firefighters jump into burning buildings, brave smoke and falling debris, make daring rescues, and save children. In honoring Isaac, we honor all of his co-workers, the entire San Bernardino city fire department, indeed all firefighters. There are many other firefighters and public safety personnel who also labor day in and day out, putting themselves in harm's way. So in giving this honor, we are honoring them all.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we salute Isaac Horn, and those like him, who serve the public and keep our communities safe.

IN HONOR OF THE ANNIVERSARY
OF WALTER AND LOTTIE
KACZMAREK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two wonderful people, Walter and Lottie Kaczmarek, on their 70th anniversary.

It is truly a joyous occasion to celebrate the anniversary of a marriage. A marriage joins two people in true love, unity, respect, and trust. Walter and Lottie have a special bond together that has brought joy and happiness into the lives of all they have touched, and love for each other that transcends all material barriers. Their relationship has cultivated and grown over the past 70 years, and their love for each other has only become stronger.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring this very special 70th anniversary of Walter and Lottie Kaczmarek. Their love and devotion for each other bonds them together in a very special relationship, and I wish them many more happy and healthy years together.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 2620) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the amendment offered by my colleague from Michigan. The Combined Sewer Overflow control grant program invests desperately needed funds into our local communities to upgrade dilapidated waste water treatment facilities. We can all agree that protecting the safety of our local communities' water supply is of vital importance. Unfortunately, many cities and towns lack the necessary funds to improve their wastewater treatment plans to ensure clean drinking water. Without additional funds for the Combined Sewer Overflow control grant program, local governments will be forced to curtail critically needed improvements to their sewer infrastructure.

My constituents are contacting me for help to address wastewater infrastructure problems in the 4th District of Michigan. This is not, however, only a Michigan issue, it is also a problem in many states including Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Illinois, among others. Given this great need for wastewater infrastructure improvements, we must not sit idle on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, adequate funding for sewer overflow systems is essential particularly since the Committee has lowered funds for the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund from \$1.35 billion last year to \$1.2 billion this year. I believe the goal of clean water can further be realized if communities have the much-needed federal support to fix their sewer infrastructure problems. Local governments are facing staggering costs that range in the billions of dollars to sustain and improve sewer infrastructure. They are calling on us for help. This is an important investment in ensuring environmental quality and I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

IN MEMORY OF DETECTIVE JOHN
GIBSON AND OFFICER JACOB
CHESTNUT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Detective John Gibson and Officer Jacob Chestnut, both members of the Capitol Security Force, who were killed in the line of fire on July 24, 1998.

Three years ago, both Gibson and Chestnut fell victim to one of the most horrific crimes in the Capitol building in recent years. Crazy gunman Russell Weston entered through what used to be known as the Document Door, and fittingly renamed the Memorial Door, and terrorized tourists, staffers, and eventually shot Gibson and Chestnut.

Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut were identified as two 18-year veterans of the force. Both were married and had children.

This outbreak of violence caught everyone off guard and security measures quickly

heightened. The latest add-ons to this new effort for increased security are completion of a new Capitol Police training facility and a pilot program that would allow Congressional Staffers to enter buildings with electronic I.Ds. Increased security has now become a high priority in the Capitol and has increased the safety of not only Capitol employees, but the thousands of tourists that visit this glorious structure year after year.

The Capitol Security Officers put their lives on the line day after day for the safety of not only the elected officials that work within the Capitol, but for the thousands of tourists that visit this glorious building year after year. Their dedications, hard-work, and courage have kept hundreds of thousands of people safe throughout the years.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the memory of two dedicated men, Detective John Gibson and Officer Jacob Chestnut, for their dedicated service to the Capitol and our country.

TRIBUTE TO BEN ALEXANDER, OF
THE SAN BERNARDINO CITY
FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

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Mr. Speaker, Ben is a leading firefighter in our community. He has served as a firefighter/paramedic and a member of the tactical medical team. The team is part of a police swat team, which goes in armed to treat downed officers. Ben was instrumental in getting it started. His chosen occupation takes him to work in the busiest areas of the city. He is deeply committed to his work, and has a great sense