

I urge my colleagues to support enactment of this legislation to provide for a study to determine the sustainability and feasibility of the island St. Croix becoming the 24th National Heritage Area.

GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS  
ISSUES

**HON. ROBERT WEXLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 3, 2003*

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking Democrat on the Europe Subcommittee, I believe my colleagues in Congress will be interested in the following letter sent by the Turkish Cypriot Leader Rauf Denktas to the Greek Cypriot Leader Tassas Papadopoulos on April 2, 2003. I am hopeful that Mr. Denktas's letter and its content will be a catalyst for renewed dialogue between Greek and Turkish Cypriots and a positive step toward a comprehensive resolution to their long-standing issues.

In this letter, Mr. Denktas provides a detailed proposal to lift all overseas trade, transport, travel and cultural activities from both parts of Cyprus. He calls for freedom of movement to be facilitated between the two sides and restrictions on the movement of tourists to be lifted as well. His measures also include allowing Greek Cypriot refugees to return to the Greek Cypriot sector of Famagusta. Finally, Mr. Denktas expressed his willingness to meet with Mr. Papadopoulos to discuss the core issues of a comprehensive settlement with the objective of reaching an agreement between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

While I understand that the long-standing Cyprus issue cannot be solved without great sacrifice by both sides, it is incredibly important that the United States and the international community work together to resolve this issue. Please know, I remain firmly committed to helping both Greek and Turkish Cypriots overcome obstacles and bring about a lasting peace for future generations.

APRIL 2, 2003.

DEAR MR. PAPADOPOULOS: Since our return from the Netherlands on 11 March 2003, I have been trying to reassess in depth the negotiating process resulting in the stalemate at The Hague.

Based on our re-evaluation and the responses given to the UN Secretary-General's proposals by both sides, I am now convinced more than ever that we have for too long overlooked the significance of the socio-psychological dimension of the problem, and especially the deep crisis of confidence between the two sides.

The Turkish Cypriot side sincerely wishes a lasting settlement to the forty year-old question of Cyprus. In achieving a sustainable and viable settlement that would be acceptable to both sides, the first meaningful step should, without doubt, be the improvement of the political environment within which we could allow for the evolution of a working relationship between the two sides through the building up of trust and confidence. This would enable us to resolve pending issues, thus preparing the ground for a comprehensive settlement. The island is, no doubt, the common home of the two co-owner peoples in Cyprus. In this context, I wish to share with you the following ideas and suggestions which I believe could initiate a process of dialogue and consultation leading to a working relationship between

us. This would greatly enhance the prospects for and paved the way to a mutually acceptable comprehensive settlement based on the political equality of the two sides and bring tangible benefits to both parties.

(i) As a first step, the fenced area of Varosha south of Dhimoktrathias street, including the area extending to the UN Buffer Zone, will be transferred to the Greek Cypriot control to be opened for resettlement.

(ii) Parallel to this, all restrictions on overseas trade, transport, travel and cultural and sportive activities from or to both parts of Cyprus will be lifted. I am convinced that Turkey and Greece will also positively respond to this by removing the restrictions which they apply to the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides respectively. We shall invite the UN and EU to acknowledge and give effect to these arrangements.

(iii) The freedom of movement will be facilitated between the two sides, subject only to minimal procedures. The restrictions on the movement of tourists will also be lifted.

(iv) Steps will be taken gradually for the normalization of the flow of goods between the two parties on the island. Cooperation shall be also encouraged between the institutions of both sides to identify and develop joint projects.

(v) The Turkish Cypriot side will lift the measures regarding the movement of UNFICYP of July 2000.

(vi) A bilateral Reconciliation Committee will be established with the objective of promoting understanding, tolerance and mutual respect between the two parties. This Committee will make specific recommendations for promoting bilateral contacts and projects. These ideas and suggestions constitute a package and should be regarded as an integrated whole. The acceptance and implementation of this package will neither prejudice our respective positions, nor will it be a substitute to a final settlement. I am prepared to discuss with you the above points and their modalities with the aim of initiating a cooperative relationship. In doing this, we could benefit from the assistance of the UN and the EU. These measures, I believe, would bring about a positive climate to the island and to our region. On the understanding of the above, I am also ready to talk with you the core issues of the comprehensive settlement and matters related to EU membership with the objective of reaching a mutually satisfactory conclusion. As we both supported the good-offices mission, I am taking the liberty of sending a copy of this letter to the UN Secretary-General.

Sincerely,

RAUF R. DENKTAS.

SUPPORT AMERICAN-GROWN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ!

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 3, 2003*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I recently introduced a resolution supporting humanitarian assistance from the United States to Iraq. H. Con. Res. 127 reinforces the ideal that we should send American-grown and made products to Iraq—and on American ships!

The United States obviously has a deep and enduring interest in the welfare of the citizens of Iraq who have been living under the regime of Saddam Hussein for decades. Iraq is currently suffering a humanitarian crisis that could worsen during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

An estimated 4.5 million to 10 million people in Iraq, about 40 percent of the population, will require food assistance within a few weeks. Unfortunately, most of the warehouses in Iraq that store food under the "Oil-for-Food" program are empty. There are few food reserves in Iraq. If action is not taken to address this shortfall, people will die of starvation.

Now that Operation Iraqi Freedom has begun, it is our duty to recognize the need for, and prepare for, the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the people of Iraq. It is our obligation to provide American-grown commodities, such as wheat, to Iraq!

Food security will be significant in improving the quality of life the people of Iraq. Providing United States agricultural commodities to Iraq will help alleviate the humanitarian crisis there, as well as help strengthen our Nation's economy. Our Nation's farmers would certainly be proud to supply humanitarian assistance to a country in great need. Further, our United States maritime industry would be honored to ship supplies to Iraq in order to help with this critical effort.

In addition, the Department of Defense recently created the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. This office is a coordinated effort between government agencies in order to plan and implement assistance programs in a post-war Iraq. The resolution I have introduced commends the Department of Defense for recognizing the need for, and taking an inter-agency approach to, the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance for Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we can, and must, help to improve the living conditions of the civilian population of Iraq! The fact that we can do this with American products makes this humanitarian effort all the more beneficial, significant, and crucial!

HONORING McNEIL NUTRITIONALS,  
SPLENDIA PLANT, McINTOSH,  
ALABAMA

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 3, 2003*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize McNeil Nutritionals, Splenda Plant, a revolutionary manufacturer located in McIntosh, Alabama.

Each year the Alabama Technology Network and the Business Council of Alabama honors outstanding manufacturers with their Alabama Manufacturer of the Year Awards. This year, McNeil Nutritionals, Splenda plant, has received recognition as a Medium Manufacturer for excellence in leadership, performance, profitability and work force relations. McNeil was chosen based on its demonstration of superior performance in the areas of customer focus, employee commitment, operational excellence, continuous improvement, profitable growth and investment in training and retraining.

McNeil Nutritionals manufactures Splenda, the only no-calorie sweetener made from raw sugar which is from 650 to 750 times sweeter than sugar. This product was introduced in

2001 and within one year achieved the number two market share in low-calorie sweeteners in the world. As a result, Splenda saw more than 100 percent profit growth from 2001 to 2002. Also in that year, McNeil Nutritionals had a 110 percent sales growth from its base year and implemented "Six Sigma" quality projects that resulted in cost savings of \$15 million.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you and my colleagues to join me, the Alabama Technology Network and the Business Council of Alabama in honoring McNeil Nutritionals, Splenda Plant, for its outstanding accomplishments. I also want to recognize and thank McNeil Nutritionals for its contributions to the local economy and to the quality of life enjoyed in the State of Alabama.

PRESIDENTIAL GIFTS  
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

**HON. DOUG OSE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 3, 2003*

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce a revised version of my "Presidential Gifts Accountability Act." During the 107th Congress, I introduced an initial bill, H.R. 1081. Both versions of this good government bill establish responsibility in one agency for the receipt, valuation and disposition of Presidential gifts.

In January 2001, there were press accounts of President Clinton's last financial disclosure report, which covered calendar year 2000 and January 1–20, 2001. This report revealed that the Clintons chose to retain \$190,027 in gifts, each over \$260, during this period. In February 2001, there were press accounts of numerous furniture gifts to the White House residence, which the Clintons returned to the U.S. Government. These press stories led me to question how the current Presidential gifts system works and what legislative changes, if any, are needed to prevent future abuses.

I believe that the American people have the right to know what gifts were received and retained by their President. Additionally, I believe that donors should not receive an unfair advantage in the policymaking process or other governmental benefits.

To prevent future abuses, in March 2001, I introduced H.R. 1081, the "Accountability for Presidential Gifts Act," which had bi-partisan support during the 107th Congress. The Government Reform Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs, which I chair, spent nearly a year gathering the empirical data to support and improve such a legislative effort.

The Subcommittee found that several laws, involving six Federal offices and agencies, govern the current system. In February 2002, the Subcommittee released a 55-page document summarizing the Subcommittee's findings. The Subcommittee identified a host of problems with the Presidential gifts system, such as consistently undervalued gifts and questionable White House Counsel rulings. Since the current system is subject to abuse and political interference, I believe that there is a need for centralized accountability in one agency staffed by career employees. My bill establishes responsibility in one agency—

staffed by career employees—for the receipt, valuation and disposition of Presidential gifts.

On October 28, 2002, my Subcommittee's analysis was presented in House Report 107–768, "Problems with the Presidential Gifts System." The Report summarized how the current system works, my Subcommittee's investigation and findings, and recommendations made in my Subcommittee's hearing and a second hearing by the Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Efficiency, Financial Management and Intergovernmental Relations. The Report's findings included: Non-Competitive Hiring of Political Appointee for Career Job, Some Gifts Over the Reporting Threshold Were Not Disclosed, Some Gifts Were Solicited, Many Gifts Were Undervalued, Some Gifts Were Not Included in the White House Database, Some Gifts Were Lost, Questionable White House Counsel Rulings, Some U.S. Property Was Taken, Most Furniture Gifts Were Coordinated, Some Gift Certificates Were Accepted, and Huge Gifts to the Presidential Library

The total value of gifts retained by the former First Family over an 8-year period creates at least an appearance problem. The fact that so many gifts were undervalued raises many questions. The fact that gifts were misplaced or lost show sloppy management and maybe more. The fact that U.S. government property was improperly taken is troubling. And, the fact that, after the former First Lady's election to the U.S. Senate and before she was subject to the Congress' very strict gift acceptance rules, the former First Family accepted nearly \$40,000 in furniture gifts and the First Lady solicited nearly \$40,000 in fine china and silver is disturbing at best. Public servants, including the President, should not be able to enrich themselves with lavish gifts.

The revised version of my bill, which I am introducing today, reflects several recommendations made by public witnesses at both hearings on the earlier version. These include the President of Common Cause and the Director for Public Service of The Brookings Institution, both of which expressed support for the bill. I believe that, if enacted, this bill will provide transparency for the public, establish discipline in the multi-agency system, and ensure accountability. A section-by-section analysis of the bill's provisions is attached to this introductory statement.

The current system is clearly broken and needs to be fixed.

To expedite progress, I am also sending a letter to the President today to recommend some changes in the current system, which he can make administratively to provide transparency, discipline, and accountability. These include interagency coordination, establishment of a unified database with a single numbering system, and annual public disclosure of all Presidential gifts over \$100 (except a gift from a foreign government or a relative). A copy of this letter is also attached to this introductory statement.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

*Washington, DC, April 3, 2003.*

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,

*The White House,  
Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Today, after a lengthy investigation and two hearings of Government Reform Subcommittees, I introduced an improved version of my "Presidential Gifts Accountability Act." This good government bill establishes responsibility in

one agency for the receipt, valuation, and disposition of Presidential gifts. In the meantime, I am writing you to recommend some changes in the current system, which can be made administratively.

Several laws, involving six Federal offices and agencies, govern the current system. The Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs, which I chair, identified a host of problems with the system in use during the prior Administration, such as consistently undervalued gifts and questionable White House Counsel rulings. These are presented in House Report 107–768, "Problems with the Presidential Gifts System." Since the system is subject to abuse and political interference, I believe that there is a need for centralized accountability in one agency staffed by career employees. My bill establishes responsibility in one agency for the receipt, valuation and disposition of Presidential gifts.

At the second hearing in June 2002, it was revealed that only minor changes were made by your Administration to address the problems revealed in the first hearing in February 22. In July 2002, my Subcommittee invited your staff and the six affected agencies to a meeting to identify changes, which could be made administratively. The attendees confirmed that, since the Subcommittee's investigation began: there has been no inter-agency meeting or other coordination between the six agencies; there is no unified database system in use by the six agencies for the receipt, valuation and disposition of Presidential gifts; and, there is no single numbering system for Presidential gifts. Please consider such coordination and establishment of a unified database with a single numbering system. In addition, I recommend annual public disclosure of all Presidential gifts over \$100 (except a gift from a foreign government or a relative).

As the Director for Public Service at the Brookings Institution stated, "In this moment of heightened public confidence in government, the presidential gift process offers the potential for staggering embarrassment and diminished accountability. The current fragmented process for logging, valuing, and manging gifts to the president defies bureaucratic logic, and appears designed more to frustrate accountability than enhance it. One could design a more unwieldy system if one started out do so." I agree with his assessment.

Sincerely,

DOUG OSE,  
*Member of Congress.*

CHILD ABDUCTION PREVENTION  
ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 27, 2003*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1104) to prevent child abduction, and for other purposes:

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1104 the Child Abduction Prevention Act. This legislation takes a significant step toward bringing child abductors to justice by aiding law enforcement agencies to effectively prevent, investigate and prosecute crimes against children. H.R. 1104 also provides families and communities with immediate and effective assistance to recover a