

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, on November 17 I was unavoidably detained in my district and was not able to vote on rollcall votes numbered 620, 621, 622, and 623. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall 620, "aye" on rollcall 621, "aye" on rollcall 622, and "aye" on rollcall 623.

ACKNOWLEDGING MR. DENNIS DOUGHERTY, CEO OF VISUAL ELECTRONICS, LTD

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Mr. Dennis Dougherty, the CEO of Visual Electronics, Ltd. Dennis has not only been a leading entrepreneur in Colorado, he is also an active leader of the Human Rights Campaign and an outspoken proponent of civil rights. Still a Republican, despite my entreaties to the contrary, Dennis is living proof that one can be a hard-driving and successful businessman and also contribute to causes that are beyond self-interest and the so-called "bottom line."

A Colorado newspaper recently published a profile on Dennis Dougherty and included some highlights of his career in the ever-changing high technology sector. I would like to share a few items that describe Dennis and his contributions to both the private and public sectors:

As the hands-on director of a 25 year old customer service-oriented company, Dougherty has weathered tough economic times by stressing attention to client satisfaction. Visual Electronics marketing manager, Kim Johnson, said, "If you make a client happy, they're going to come back to you."

Dennis was raised in Omaha, Nebraska and served in Vietnam after being drafted by the Army. Dennis served honorably and in a time and place where being an "out gay person" was unheard of and dangerous.

Through 12 hour work days and a continuing commitment to meet the needs of his customers, Dennis built a multi-million dollar company providing ACD monitoring systems for call centers, 911 emergency operations, help desks and tech support lines. Visual Electronics is, in its own way, a prime example of the growth potential in technology services.

Dougherty has also been a regional and national philanthropist, supporting human rights work, aimed at establishing equal rights for gays and lesbians. Dennis is also a major supporter of the Colorado AIDS Project and the National Sports Center for the Disabled in Winter Park, Colorado.

Coloradans are proud of Dennis Dougherty and the contribution he and his company have made to our state. Through his attention to detail, his strong people skills, his sales acumen and his outstanding commitment to his work colleagues, Dennis and Visual Electronics, Ltd. are valuable members of our business community and I am proud to recognize him today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM RYUN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I missed four votes in the House of Representatives on November 17, 2003. Had I been in attendance I would have made the following votes:

Passage of S.J. Res. 22, Recognizing the Agricultural Research Service of the Department of Agriculture for 50 years of outstanding service to the Nation through agricultural research. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted "yea."

Passage of S.J. Res. 18, Commending the Inspectors General for their efforts to prevent and detect waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement, and to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the Federal Government during the past 25 years. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted "yea."

Passage of H. Con. Res. 299, Honoring Mr. Sargent Shriver for his dedication and service to the United States of America, for his service in the United States Navy, and for his lifetime of work as an ambassador for the poor and powerless citizens of the United States of America, and for other purposes. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted "yea."

On the Motion regarding the Hour of Meeting. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO BRANDON PHILIP WATTERS

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a brave young man from my home district, who selflessly gave his life trying to save a friend.

On June 25, 2003, Brandon Philip Watters was at Sequoia National Park with his brother, Garett, and friends. They were swimming at "the cliffs," along the Kaweah River. Brandon was enjoying a well-deserved summer break from pre-med courses at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Suddenly, Brandon noticed that his friend, Renne Suddeth, was caught in the rapids. Without thought to his own safety, he immediately dove in the water, struggling against the roiling waters. Marshaling every bit of his strength, he was able to get his nearly drowned friend to safety.

Just as Garett pulled Renne from the river, Brandon was pulled underneath the turbulent water by strong currents. Recognizing the extreme peril of diving in after Brandon, who was the strongest swimmer among them, the others kept each other from jumping in after him.

Brandon's courageous act cost him his life. The water was so treacherous that well-trained, experienced divers noted that it hindered their recovery efforts for more than two hours.

Brandon was undoubtedly aware of the danger. We know that he would make the same decision were he given that choice again. His

sacrifice is a testimony to his personal character.

That was even evident as hundreds of his friends flocked to St. Mary's Church to honor his memory. His wit, intelligence, self-effacing modesty, generosity and kindness have touched many people.

I urge my colleagues to join me by extending their sympathies and deepest gratitude to the family of Brandon Watters for his life and sacrifice. He will be missed.

GAP IN HOMELAND SECURITY

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a serious gap in our homeland security strategy and to encourage my colleagues to work with me to move expeditiously and cost effectively to remedy this problem. Currently, the Coast Guard only employs eight armed air assets that are equipped to use force to protect our entire port and waterway network and to enforce our nation's drug laws. This is unacceptable. This fleet is obviously much too small to provide coverage to the almost 90,000 miles of U.S. coastline and hundreds of ports and waterways. In light of this serious vulnerability, it is my strong belief that the Coast Guard should move quickly to initiate a competition for a new multi-mission armed cutter helicopter. We need more assets now and should not stand idle while millions of Americans who live along our coastlines remain vulnerable. This being said, I completely support the mandate of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee contained in H.R. 2443 that directs the Coast Guard to expand its fleet of armed Sting Ray helicopters. The plan to acquire additional HITRON Sting Ray helicopters through a flexible lease arrangement is a common sense interim solution until a new state-of-the-art multi-purpose helicopter can be deployed. In the aftermath of 9-11, the Sting Ray fleet suddenly has a key role on the front lines of both America's war on drugs and terrorism.

On September 15, 2003, Coast Guard Subcommittee Chairman LoBiondo and Ranking Member Filner wrote the leadership of the Appropriations Committee to emphasize the priority our Coast Guard Subcommittee is giving to the establishment of an expanded fleet of MH-68A armed helicopters. Recognizing the Coast Guard is confronting a serious challenge in trying to balance its limited resources to meet both its humanitarian missions and its new homeland security responsibilities, it is my belief that the only way to effectively address this problem is to increase the number of assets tasked to perform these kinds of operations and to ensure that these assets have prioritized missions. The Coast Guard simply does not have enough assets to perform all their traditional missions plus all their new responsibilities. As a result, the Coast Guard should acquire additional assets for the airborne use of force mission.

I am particularly alarmed over reports out of the Coast Guard that there is a plan to rebuild their existing 20 year old HH-65 fleet rather than replace it through a competitive process. This is a classic case of being penny wise and