EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL L. STERN

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2004

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal appreciation, and the appreciation of the United States House of Representatives, for the service of Michael L. Stern to the House as Senior Counsel in the Office of General Counsel. After more than 8 years in the Office, Mr. Stern will be moving to the other side of the Capitol to become the Deputy Staff Director for the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

Mr. Stern has provided invaluable assistance and advice to the House and its Members, Officers, and Committees in connection with a broad range of legal matters. Many House Committees and Subcommittees, in particular, have come to rely on his expertise and guidance in connection with their investigative and oversight activities. Mr. Stern has brought his litigation skills to bear both in defending Members and other House employees and entities in judicial proceedings at the trial and appellate levels, and in responding to deposition, trial, grand jury, and administrative subpoenas. Over the years, Mr. Stern has also played a significant role in safeguarding the legal and institutional interests of the House in its interactions with other governmental entities.

I know that Mr. Stern will serve the Senate with the same level of distinction with which he served the House. On behalf of the entire House of Representatives, I thank him for his many years of service and extend to him our very best wishes for his continued success.

A PROCLAMATION THANKING THE 1001ST QUARTERMASTER COMPANY FOR THEIR SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2004

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, the men and women of the 1001st Quartermaster Company of the Army Reserves are returning home after serving their country in Iraq; and

Whereas, the men and women of the 1001st Quartermaster Company are to be commended for their honor and bravery that they displayed while serving our nation in this time of war; and

Whereas, the men and women of the 1001st Quartermaster Company have demonstrated a commitment to meet challenges with enthusiasm, confidence, and outstanding service;

Therefore, I join with your family and friends, the residents of the Ohio Valley and the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in thanking the men and women of the 1001st Quartermaster Company for their service to our country.

CONGRATULATING THE SAUK RAPIDS-RICE STORM ON THEIR VICTORY IN THE MINNESOTA CLASS A BOYS SWIMMING AND DIVING STATE TOURNAMENT

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2004

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sauk Rapids-Rice Storm on their victory in the Minnesota Class A Boys Swimming and Diving State Tournament. This is the first State title for the Storm after finishing second last season.

Coached by Tom Swanson, the Storm narrowly defeated Hutchinson, 237–233, by placing first in the last event of the meet, the 400 freestyle relay. Two seniors on the relay team had been involved in the swimming program since the seventh grade—Jason Timmer and Connor Ziegler. Timmer also placed first in the 50 and 100 freestyle, posting All-American times in both events and setting a state Class A record in the 100.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the students, coaches and fans from Sauk Rapids-Rice High School on their championship season. It's a great tribute to their hard work, dedication and overall team effort and I know everyone in Minnesota is proud of their accomplishments.

FLORIDA AS THE NEXT FLORIDA

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2004

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD.

FLORIDA AS THE NEXT FLORIDA

[From the New York Times, Mar. 14, 2004]

As Floridians went to the polls last Tuesday, Glenda Hood, Katherine Harris's successor as secretary of state, assured the Nation that Florida's voting system would not break down this year the way it did in 2000. Florida now has ''the very best'' technology available, she declared on CNN. ''And I do feel that it's a great disservice to create the feeling that there's a problem when there is not.'' Hours later, results in Bay County showed that with more than 60 percent of precincts reporting, Richard Gephardt, who long before had pulled out of the presidential race, was beating John Kerry by two to one. ''I'm devastated,'' the county's top election official said, promising a recount of his county's 19,000 votes.

Four years after Florida made a mockery of American elections, there is every reason to believe it could happen again. This time, the problems will most likely be with the electronic voting that has replaced chad-producing punch cards. Some counties, including Bay County, use paper ballots that are fed into an optical scanner, so a recount is possible if there are questions. But 15 Florida counties, including Palm Beach, home of the infamous ''butterfly ballot,'' have adopted touch-screen machines that do not produce a paper record. If anything goes wrong in these counties in November, we will be in bad shape.

Florida's official line is that its machines are so carefully tested, nothing can go wrong. But things already have gone wrong. In a January election in Palm Beach and Broward Counties, the victory margin was 12 votes, but the machines recorded more than 130 blank ballots. It is simply not believable that 130 people showed up to cast a nonvote, in an election with only one race on the ballot. The runner-up wanted a recount, but since the machines do not produce a paper record, there was nothing to recount.

In 2002, in the primary race for governor between Janet Reno and Bill McBride, electronic voting problems were so widespread they cast doubt on the outcome. Many Miami-Dade County votes were not counted on election night because machines were shut down improperly. One precinct with over 1,000 eligible voters recorded no votes, despite a 33 percent turnout statewide. Election workers spent days hunting for lost votes, while Floridians waited, in an uncomfortable replay of 2000, to see whether Mr. McBride's victory margin, which had dwindled to less than 10,000, would hold up.

This past Tuesday, even though turnout was minimal, there were problems. Voters were wrongly given computer cards that let them vote only on local issues, not in the presidential primary. Machines did not work. And there were, no doubt, other mishaps that did not come to light because of the stunning lack of transparency around voting in the State. When a Times editorial writer dropped in on one Palm Beach precinct where there were reports of malfunctioning machines, county officials called the police to remove him.

The biggest danger of electronic voting, however, cannot be seen from the outside. Computer scientists warn that votes, and whole elections, can be stolen by rigging the code that runs the machines. The only defense is a paper record of every vote cast, a ''voter-verified paper trail,'' which can be counted if the machines' tallies are suspect. Given its history, Florida should be a leader in requiring paper trails. But election officials, including Theresa LePore, the Palm Beach County elections supervisor who was responsible for the butterfly ballot, have refused to put them in place.

Last week, Representative Robert Wexler, a Florida Democrat, filed a Federal lawsuit to require paper trails. He relies on the Supreme Court's holding in Bush v. Gore that equal protection requires States to use comparable recount methods from county to county. Florida law currently requires a hand recount in close races. That is possible in most counties, but the 15 that use electronic voting machines do not produce paper records that can be recounted. Under the logic of Bush v. Gore, Representative Wexler is right.