

foresight and belief that I could run for Secretary of State and win that race—which I did. She served as an honorary chair on many of my campaigns and taught me valuable lessons that I still use today.

While her dedication to the Democratic Party and the state of Rhode Island was great, Eleanor was above all dedicated to her family, and my thoughts and prayers are with her two sons, William and Thomas; her brother Robert Boland; her sister, Dorothy Merrill; her four grandchildren; and her five great grandchildren.

While I am sad to say goodbye to such a wonderful woman, at 97 years old, we should celebrate Eleanor's long, distinguished life. Eleanor, you made a difference.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

**HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY**

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 8, 2006*

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favor of passing H.R. 4472, The Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act of 2006. However, I want to make clear the serious concerns I have regarding some of the content of this legislation and the manner in which it is being considered by the House of Representatives.

I ultimately support this legislation, primarily because it incorporates the core content contained in H.R. 3132, The Children's Safety Act of 2005, which was previously passed by the House of Representatives on September 14, 2005. H.R. 3132—and by extension H.R. 4472—provides for vital improvements to strengthen the ability of our justice system to protect children from sex offenders. This legislation helps to develop a comprehensive national approach to prevent sex offenders from preying on our children, as it creates a national sex offender registry and increases penalties for sex crimes against children. Like everyone else, I have been horrified by the recent cases of abductions and murders of children by sex offenders, and am determined to do everything in my power as a public official to prevent such tragedies from ever occurring again.

I am also supportive of the main provisions of H.R. 1751, The Secure Access to Justice and Court Protection Action of 2005, which are included in H.R. 4472. These provisions would increase federal penalties for the assault, murder, or kidnapping of judges and court employees and make it a federal crime to kill or assault public safety officers or other court personnel.

However, H.R. 4472 also contains the core content of additional legislation, H.R. 1279, The Gang Deterrence and Community Protection Act of 2005, which I voted against last year on May 11, 2005. H.R. 1279—and by extension H.R. 4472—creates new federal criminal penalties and mandatory minimums for crimes committed by gang members, yet it loosely defines the definition of gang membership. Further, it redefines "crimes of violence" to include drug-trafficking crimes, and authorizes the Attorney General to charge a juvenile

as an adult for certain crimes. I believe this aspect of the legislation has many flaws, one of which is the ability to penalize even non-violent drug dealing and some misdemeanors as "crimes of violence." I am opposed to prosecuting youth as adults and imposing mandatory minimum sentences.

We already incarcerate two million people, about half for non-violent drug crimes, and I believe that we need to emphasize more prevention and early intervention programs geared towards at-risk youth. This legislation seriously errs in its lack of focus on prevention and early intervention, which time after time has proven to be the most effective way to prevent juvenile, and ultimately, adult crime.

I also think it is yet another abuse of the procedures of the House by the majority to bring up this bill on the suspension calendar. The suspension calendar, which does not permit amendments, is intended for non-controversial bills for which there is broad consensus. For the reasons described above and others, many Members of this body have reservations about H.R. 4472. Undoubtedly, a number of Members would have offered improving amendments if given the opportunity. Perhaps those amendments would have been rejected by a majority of the House, and would have failed. Perhaps they would have been approved unanimously. Bringing this legislation up on the suspension calendar subverts the democratic process. Particularly given that the House has already passed the entire contents of H.R. 4472, it is patently obvious that the sole purpose of bringing up H.R. 4472 without an ability to amend it is to play politics.

In conclusion, my vote in favor of passing H.R. 4472 comes despite my reservations regarding these controversial provisions, and is driven by my overriding concern for the safety of our nation's most valuable asset—our children. I continue to have major concerns about some elements of the legislation, and particularly the manner in which it has been brought up. Protecting our nation's children should be our overriding priority, and worth real debate and attention from the House.

IN RECOGNITION OF FIFTY YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE FOR THE TUNISIAN REPUBLIC AND U.S.-TUNISIAN RELATIONS

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 16, 2006*

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the people of the Tunisian Republic and extend my congratulations to President Ben Ali as his nation celebrates fifty years of independence on March 20, 2006.

The United States and Tunisia have a strong relationship that promotes cooperation on important bilateral and regional issues. The engagement between our two countries on economic, security and cultural matters is vibrant and reflects a commitment to enhancing and strengthening our bilateral relationship for the future. In this regard, both our nations should have more desire than ever before to strengthen our ties and build even stronger bridges between our countries. The strength of our friendship also allows our two nations to

openly discuss issues in which common perspectives are not shared. In this regard we must continue to work together to find common ground that reflects the respective values and hopes of the American and Tunisian people.

Tunisia has a critically important stabilizing role in both Africa and the Middle East. We should clearly recognize Tunisia as a diplomatic and political force for moderation and shared security in the Maghreb region. I thank the Tunisian government for its cooperation with the United States in combating terrorism and for its commitment to continue this positive partnership. At a time when extremists in various parts of the world are promoting violence and intolerance, Tunisia's moderate role is vital to promoting security, as well as peace.

One area of great interest to me is the status of women and girls around the world. Over the past fifty years, Tunisia has been an example of a nation willing to raise the status of women by promoting opportunities for women and girls to achieve their potential and contribute their skills to society. Today, schools and universities are filled with girls and women preparing themselves to help lead Tunisia into the future. This, for me, is a very exciting prospect indeed.

Mr. Speaker, let us extend our warmest regards to the people of Tunisia, officials of the Tunisian Republic and President Ben Ali on their celebration of fifty years of independence. Their friendship and decades of cooperation with the people of the United States is truly valuable and a relationship that I intend to work to both maintain as well as strengthen.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. XAVIER BECERRA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 16, 2006*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on March 15, 2006, I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall 43. The vote I missed was an amendment to H.R. 4939.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "no" on rollcall 43.

CANADIAN BORDER PARTNERSHIP

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 16, 2006*

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of the House International Relations Committee, I would like to congratulate our neighbors to the north on their recent Parliamentary elections and the swearing in of Stephen Harper, the 22nd Prime Minister of Canada on February 6, 2006. Prime Minister Harper ran a successful campaign focused on a conservative agenda and creating a smaller, more effective government.

Our two countries have had and will continue to have friendly diplomatic relations. The United States and Canada are each other's largest trading partners with \$1.3 billion of trade crossing our shared border every day. It is my sincere desire that our American and the newly formed Canadian Government are

not overly consumed by our economic ties that we turn a blind eye to ensuring strong border security. Our two countries will need to stand side by side and continue working together as neighbors to approach future challenges and confront mutual dangers to keep our countries safe from terrorism.

It is now a known fact, despite some of the rhetoric in the American media, that none of the 9/11 hijackers entered across the U.S.-Canadian border to plan and implement their attacks. However, there have been two confirmed cases of terrorists captured while attempting to cross our large and extensive northern border. There is no denying that this threat still exists today and those who seek to do us harm will continue to exploit our vulnerabilities.

The United States and Canada have taken measures to better secure our shared border. Recent efforts include a 32-point plan, commonly referred to as the "Smart Border Accord" that secures the border and facilitates the flow of travelers and goods through coordinated law enforcement operations, intelligence-sharing, infrastructure improvements, improvement of compatible immigration databases, visa policy coordination, common biometric identifiers in travel documents, prescreening of air passengers, joint passenger analysis units, and improved processing of refugee and asylum claims. I applaud these efforts and welcome ways to improve document standards that govern travel across our borders. I believe this can be done without sacrificing security and efficiency.

In today's world, with the threats that we face, it is essential that we have friends and allies. Our Canadian neighbors to the north

are our friends. I again congratulate them on their successful elections and look forward to working together in the future to ensure that both countries remain safe, secure, and prosperous for years to come.

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HONORING OFFICER MARC A.  
REIDER

**HON. JIM GERLACH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 16, 2006*

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Marc A. Reider for his thirty years of exemplary service to the citizens and businesses of Tredyffrin Township in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Officer Reider retired as a decorated officer on December 23, 2005 from the Tredyffrin Township Police Department.

As an outstanding public servant, Officer Reider retired as one of the most highly trained officers in the field of accident reconstruction. In addition to his many honors, he also served on the Tredyffrin Township Police Department's Traffic Accident Review Board. While on this Board, he oversaw the agency's forensic mapping team where his leadership and attention to detail helped to recreate and solve difficult auto related cases. Officer Reider is highly regarded throughout Pennsylvania as an expert witness in vehicular accidents and also serves as a member of the American Board of Forensic Examiners.

Officer Reider also takes the time to share his knowledge with younger members of the

police force. He has held a Pennsylvania Municipal Police Certificate since 1983 and has had the distinct honor of serving as an expert instructor in traffic accident investigations for the Montgomery County Municipal Police Academy. Throughout his distinguished career, Officer Reider has worked tirelessly to make the Township, County, and Commonwealth a safer place. His dedication to service and professionalism will be greatly missed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Officer Marc A. Reider for his many years of exceptional service and professional contributions to the Tredyffrin Township Police Department and community. I am honored to stand before you to congratulate and celebrate Officer Marc A. Reider on his many impressive accomplishments.

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REMARKS ON H.R. 4939

**HON. JOHN CAMPBELL**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 16, 2006*

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, today, the House considered legislation to increase spending. I support the Global War on Terror and would have supported a clean bill to continue to provide financial support to our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, I could not vote for this bill because it was loaded with extraneous unrelated spending initiatives that run up our deficit and take precious resources away from our troops in the field and those fighting the War on Terrorism.