election year politics and the American people deserve better.

TRIBUTE TO PHIL MOELLER

HON. CATHY McMORRIS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Miss MCMORRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Phil Moeller for being appointed and confirmed as Commissioner for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. He was confirmed by the Senate last Friday and will serve in this position through 2010.

I have known Phil for over a decade and believe he has a unique background that will enable him to address the challenges and opportunities of our 21st century energy system. He is a native of Spokane, owns a farm in eastern Washington, and fully understands Northwest energy issues. Phil's work at the state and federal level, as well as in the private sector, has proven effective in his approach to solve problems but also strive to develop consensus on the most challenging issues.

Phil maintains the highest ethical and personal standards of achievement and conduct. His work ethic, combined with his in-depth knowledge of energy markets, hydroelectricity, oil and gas, transmission systems and our overall energy supply makes him ideal to serve as a Commissioner for FERC.

Phil served as energy policy advisor to former U.S. Senator Slade Gorton, and most recently served as the Washington representative for Alliant Energy Corp. He also worked for nearly 10 years as the staff coordinator for the Washington State Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Phil Moeller for his exceptional work to protect and develop Northwest energy and wish him the best of luck as he begins his new position as Commissioner for FERC.

ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUBLIC LAW CENTER IN ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Public Law Center for its 25 years of service to the people of Orange County, California.

Thousands of Orange County lower-income residents have benefited from the myriad of pro bono services that the PLC offers. The PLC has amassed an army of legal professionals to help our community. They hold community legal clinics every-other months. For more specific needs, they help refer clients to specialized private attorneys.

The PLC also provides assistance to local community organizations, the non-profits that understand all the challenges that our less fortunate Orange County brothers and sisters face. What would we do if we didn't have the PLC to help navigate the complicated world of employment contracts and housing agreements?

The PLC is there too for needy families, and to individuals with special needs, like people living with HIV/AIDS.

I am very grateful for the Public Law Center's work with members of the South East Asian community. Our Vietnamese community especially requires and deserves special attention, as they face legal and cultural challenges which are unique to them.

One challenge in particular is dealing with the awful scourge of human trafficking. I am proud to call the PLC a partner—along with St. Anselm's Cross Cultural Center, the cities of Santa Ana, Garden Grove and Westminster, along with other community organizations—in their work with the Orange County Human Trafficking Coalition. The U.S. Congress recently recognized the work of the Coalition by awarding it with a Federal law enforcement grant. While the Federal Government works with local law enforcement to arrest and prosecute the traffickers, the PLC and its partners work to provide services to victims. This cooperation is a model for public private cooperation.

In its 25 years, the Public Law Center has worked on countless cases, and its service to our community is immeasurable. I can only wish its board, staff and volunteers another 25 years of continued success and service.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ''PROTECTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH IN SCHOOLS ACT OF 2006''

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, helping children learn and be successful in life should be a priority for us. It is unfortunate the Bush administration does not agree. This bill, the "Protecting Children's Health in Schools Act of 2006", will stop the harmful Medicaid cuts proposed by the President so that disabled children can continue receiving the medical services they need in order to continue to learn in school. Without this bill, the administration's actions are placing children's health and education in jeopardy by leaving the brunt of the burden on already stretched State education systems.

Since 1986 Federal Medicaid policy has explicitly recognized the essential nature of the link between Medicaid and health care for low-income children whose special healthcare needs make management of and access to treatment in school settings an imperative. Recent actions by the administration, however, including audits and proposed regulatory cuts in payments to schools for providing healthcare services in the President's FY2007 budget, have created an atmosphere of uncertainty about the continued ability of children with serious and chronic health conditions to get the health care they need that will allow them to attend school in mainstream, community settings.

Rather than discouraging the provision of health care in schools, the administration should be providing extensive technical assistance to States to optimize children's opportunities to receive needed school-based health care. This would enable them to learn in community educational settings instead of being forced to remain at home, which is fully permitted under the current law. Close to 7 million children currently receive education and related services through school districts ranging from assistive technology for students with hearing disabilities to personal aides for students with several developmental or physical disabilities. These services are determined, based on a student's medical needs, to be necessary for the ''appropriate'' education of that student.

This bill I am introducing with Representatives WHITFIELD, MILLER, and many others, would set forward clear guidelines in the statute for providing and receiving reimbursement for this care, rather than put schools, families, and their disabled children, and States in a situation where they are uncertain whether or not these medically-necessary services and the related administrative and transportation costs will be covered under Medicaid. This legislation has the support of the American Association of School Administrators, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition, the Council of Great City Schools, and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, among other organizations.

The administration's current moves and proposed budget cuts curtailing Medicaid coverage and provision of health services in schools endanger the health and educational opportunities for 7 million children. This bill, in essence, maintains and protects current law coverage for children with special needs.

TRIBUTE TO THE OWEGO, NEW YORK, FIRE DEPARTMENT HOSE TEAMS

HON. SHERWOOD BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to honor the Owego, New York, Fire Department Hose Teams for placing first and second at the Central New York Firematic Hose Races on July 16, 2006, during the 113th Annual Central New York Firemen's Convention in New York Mills, New York.

In a superb victory, Owego's Susquehanna House Company #1 secured the overall points title, successfully defending its title from last year and winning its third and final leg on the overall traveling trophy. Three legs are required to retire the traveling trophy. This year's victory marks the second time the Owego team has successfully retired the trophy. Since the inception of firematic hose races in the 1940's, Owego has won 12 championships. In addition, Owego's Croton Hose #3 team finished second overall.

Team members for the Susquehanna House Company #1 included J.T. Fisher, Patrick Gavin, Tim Gavin, Danny Gavin, and Lou Striley. The Owego Fire Department proudly protects 26,000 residents, and its members participate on a volunteer status. Therefore, the winners deserve to be recognized not only for their excellent performance, but also for their outstanding service to the community as firefighters.

Both teams have donated their prize money, a total of $350, to the Owego Fire Department

Training Tower Fund in memory of fallen firefighter Steve Gavin, who hose raced for Owego teams for 34 years before his passing in the fall of 2003. I commend the winners for this noble tribute in honor of a man who gave so much to his family and community.

On behalf of the entire 24th Congressional district, I congratulate the Owego teams for their achievements, and for their tireless service to the Owego community.

STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Representatives CASTLE and DEGETTE for their tireless efforts on behalf of H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005. This important legislation provides much needed expansion of federal policy while implementing stricter ethical guidelines for this research.

I would be remiss in my commendation if I failed to mention the work of former first lady Nancy Reagan, who has been a true leader on this issue. I would like to reiterate a point made in one of her oft quoted statements on this issue, "We have lost so much time already. I just really can't bear to lose any more." Time is one commodity that we cannot create, we cannot stop and we cannot afford to waste. The American people have made clear their support for this research, and I am proud that Congress has acted. We have passed this critical stem cell legislation in both the House and the Senate. We are on the brink of moving forward in a scientific endeavor that has the potential to ease the pain and suffering of millions—to be stopped here is to deprive millions of hope.

While I commend President Bush for taking the initiative in 2001 to provide Federal funds for stem cell research, I am deeply disappointed with the decision to move ahead with this veto. Many human diseases arise from a defect in a single gene; muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, and Huntington's disease, to name a few. Embryonic research provides an unparalleled opportunity to understand and perhaps correct some of the errors that result in these medical conditions.

My own State of California has already moved ahead by establishing the Institute for Regenerative Medicine, which will devote $3 billion to embryonic stem cell over the next 10 years. As the people of California did, Congress now has the opportunity to permit embryonic stem cell research, which will allow scientists throughout the entire country to search for cures and to stay competitive with the rest of the world.

The President's veto today is not in line with the hope that he created in 2001. His leadership at that time opened a critical door to some of the most promising research of our generation, and embryonic stem cell research will enhance and advance that vision of progress. I will be voting to override this veto and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

BRIDGING YEARS OF TENSION

HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, sometimes we get it right. When we do, it's worth celebrating.

Next week on Cape Cod, in my congressional district, leaders of the Wampanoag Tribal Council will sit down with officials of Mashpee, Massachusetts, to discuss the future of the town—together.

Just a few years ago, such a meeting would have been inconceivable. The chasm between the aspirations of the Wampanoags and the fears of other local residents resulted in a generation of ill will among neighbors. Today I take to the floor of the House of Representatives to salute the people—all the people—of the Town of Mashpee for finding the higher road.

As my colleagues may know, the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs recently granted preliminary approval to the Mashpee Wampanoag's petition for tribal designation. After a public comment period now underway, it is expected that the BIA will authorize full tribal status next spring.

This designation has national significance for the tribe that originally welcomed the Pilgrims to our shores. Closer to home, its anticipation could have salted old wounds. Instead, it has inspired new collaboration. When town and tribal representatives meet next week, it will affirm our collective respect for the quality of life that has long defined Cape Cod—weaving diversity with common purpose.

This is uncharted and perhaps challenging territory, but it is an opportunity that most communities never enjoy. It begins with the considerable financial benefits—for the Tribe, for the Town and our region—that accompany tribal status. However, the decision of the Town and the Tribe to embrace this opportunity will also yield a benefit less tangible but at least as valuable: a spirit of renewal as a community, in the name of all Mashpee residents and their families.

As the following newspaper editorial outlines, "Federal recognition . . . is not simply for tribal members . . . it's about Mashpee, and that can be good for all of us. It's hard to contemplate a firmer foundation for . . . the months and years ahead."

[From the CapeNews.net]

MASHPEE EDITORIAL: A MOST ENCOURAGING LETTER

Since March 31, when the Mashpee Wampanoag received initial recognition as a federal tribe, Mashpee selectmen have been eager to get talks underway to find out what full federal acknowledgment next year will mean for the wider community. As weeks passed without any tangible response from the tribe, selectmen became a little impatient and also a tad wary, asking why tribal council members seemed unwilling to talk. From the tribe's standpoint, the lack of response was more akin to: "What's the hurry? We've waited 30 years for federal recognition. Be patient, talks will happen in due time."

Then, on May 10, Town Counsel Patrick Costello had an initial discussion with William McDermott, an attorney for the tribe, at Mr. McDermott's West Roxbury office. A month passed before the next exchange.

On June 12, Mr. Costello wrote a letter to Mr. McDermott laying out seven topics the selectmen want to discuss with the tribal council. Mr. Costello wrote: "I believe that, most, if not all, of these topics are typical subjects for discussion between federally recognized tribes and neighboring local government entities."

Perhaps so, but the dominant theme was land. What was the tribe going to do with its own land in Mashpee? What were its plans for acquiring additional land in town? What role would land claims play in acquisition?

Tribal council members have repeatedly said that there would be no return to the land suit days and that Mashpee property owners have nothing to fear from federal recognition. They have also promised that they would not bring casino gambling to Mashpee or anywhere else on Cape Cod. But selectmen believe they have a responsibility to get these two issues formalized. Town Manager Joyce Mason and the selectmen released Mr. Costello's letter and we published the full text June 16. This public airing took Mr. McDermott by surprise because he said it was his intention to keep the initial talks private.

What comes into play here is something that can add perhaps unintended tension: the very different standings of the town and the tribe. The Mashpee Wampanoag have both political and cultural leaders. They are a large extended family and a private corporation. Meetings of the tribal council are not open to non-tribal members. They don't have to make their every move public.

While selectmen can and do meet in executive session, the substance of those meetings is known in outline, whether it's litigation, for example, or a personnel issue. But outside of his carefully defined framework, selectmen are bound to conduct the town's business in public. As political leaders, they also have a vested interest in the public's knowing that they are acting responsibly in regard to the $42 million town budget and the approximately $5 billion worth of property in Mashpee. Releasing Mr. Costello's letter may not fit into the tribe's more private way of conducting business, but it lets Mashpee residents who are skeptical of unwritten agreements know that town officials are taking their fiduciary responsibilities seriously. If the tribe's delay in wanting to open talks raised concerns at town hall, these must have been somewhat alleviated Monday with the arrival of a letter from Mr. McDermott to Mr. Costello. At the selectmen's meeting Monday night, there was an almost palpable sense of relief at the most encouraging tone of Mr. McDermott's words on the tribe's behalf.

In response to the selectmen's seven topics for discussion, the tribe lists six of their own: affordable and stable housing; local public education; police and fire protection; healthcare; transportation infrastructure; and preservation and conservation of lands and waters.

The encouraging and positive tone is set in Mr. McDermott's first sentence. The six issues detailed in the letter are ones "the tribe believes are mutual objectives for the both the town and the tribe, and should be discussed when the two meet."

Mr. McDermott's second sentence gets to the nub of selectmen's concerns: "First, however, the tribe has asked me to reiterate, in response to Items 3 and 4 in your June 12 letter, the tribe's prior commitments that it will not conduct gaming activities in the Town of Mashpee or on Cape Cod, and that it will not make any claims to private lands or file suit asserting such a claim in connection with the tribe's efforts to acquire lands within the town."

The discussions, which can begin "any time during the week of July 24 that is convenient for the town," Mr. McDermott