

matters and thus missed rollcall votes Nos. 370, 371, 372, 373 and 374. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all votes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to record my rollcall votes 436 and 437. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on votes: roll No. 436 and roll No. 437.

IN HONOR OF SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY DOMINICAN HOSPITAL

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dominican Hospital on 65 years of high quality, passionate, and kindhearted healthcare in Santa Cruz County. Created by six Dominican Sisters from Adrian, Michigan, the Catholic hospital was duly named "Sisters Hospital." Today, the hospital continues to approach the healthcare needs of the region by partnering faith with scientific innovations.

Since its inception in 1941, "Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital" has consistently delivered comprehensive and modern medical care for the county. Part of the compassionate mission of Dominican Hospital is to "improve the health of the people of the greater Santa Cruz area, without distinguishing by race, creed, or source of payment . . ." The hospital is known for partnering with other healthcare providers in order to improve the quality of life for those who are less fortunate.

In 1951, "Sisters Hospital" became aware of the ever growing needs within the community for a comprehensive healthcare institution. Due to this realization, the hospital decided to expand its services and obtain a new location. The hospital acquired its Soquel Avenue location and renamed itself, Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital.

In 1984, Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital, in a partnership with the County of Santa Cruz, agreed to provide the first inpatient mental health services program in the county. This was in response to the ever growing needs the hospital saw emerging within the community. Dominican Hospital, time and time again, proves its love for the community by constantly evaluating and reacting to the needs of the people, and I am very grateful to them.

The hospital again expanded its services in 1988. It introduced the county to its first cardiac program. It also created Dominican Oaks, an assisted and independent living community, providing 206 residents with comprehensive medical support. Dominican also joined forces with Catholic Healthcare West, a hospital system of similar values and visions with locations throughout California, Arizona, and Nevada.

Dominican Hospital now serves about 150,000 patients annually, has birthed over 75,000 children, and currently counts 379

beds on two campuses. The medical specialties available at the hospital are numerous. They include, but are not limited to, complete Emergency Services, a renowned Intensive Care Service, the only Level 2 and Level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Nursery in the county, Behavioral Health Services, and an array of outreach services, and educational options focusing on community needs and health prevention.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, during an absence yesterday, I regrettably missed rollcall votes 436–437. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: rollcall No. 436: "yea" and rollcall No. 437: "yea."

AMERICAN HORSE SLAUGHTER
PREVENTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 503) to amend the Horse Protection Act to prohibit the shipping, transporting, moving, delivering, receiving, possessing, purchasing, selling, or donation of horses and other equines to be slaughtered for human consumption, and for other purposes:

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Chairman, sometimes in the House of Representatives, we debate and vote on emotional issues. H.R. 503 is certainly one of those issues, and I understand that those who support it hold strong opinions. Having grown up working on a farm and both owning and riding a horse, I do not relish the idea of them being processed for meat. It is something I personally do not care to do.

But this bill is not about whether we are a Nation of horse lovers. It is a bill about whether we are a Nation of freedom lovers. We are presented with a simple question of freedom, namely: will we grant the Federal Government the power to tell livestock owners and family farmers what they can do with their livestock?

Freedom in America often means having to tolerate actions to which we are personally opposed. To protect our freedoms we must first respect our neighbor's freedoms. For instance, I personally abhor smoking and wish every tobacco company in the country would find something else to do or cease to exist. But I will not support legislation outlawing the production and marketing of tobacco products, and I will not support legislation outlawing the use of tobacco products as long as such use does not infringe on my rights or those of my fellow citizens. I would vigorously fight efforts on this floor to regulate them out of business or prohibit them from operating in the United States. I believe there is an extremely high standard that must be met before we restrict

the historic freedoms of our fellow citizens. This bill does not even come close to meeting that test.

Those in favor of this bill make a number of arguments as to why we must ban the processing of horses. Though on the surface some of these arguments may be compelling, noticeably absent from any of them is a scientific, health, or safety argument. In fact, the primary reason that proponents of H.R. 503 offer is that we should not process horses simply because, well, they are horses. Clearly, this argument is anything but scientific, and I suspect the cattle in America may be upset with the prejudice.

Some supporters of this bill argue that we must give special protection to the horse because of its prominent place in the heritage of the American West. Well, do not cattle have an even greater place in the heritage of the American West? Yet we use that animal to protect our feet with shoes and nourish us with beef. How is the horse different? Also, I note that those who we celebrate in the history of the West were known as cowboys, not horseboys. Again, how is the horse different? I further note the lobster has a prominent place in the heritage and history of Maine, but I doubt that people of that state would argue that we should stop harvesting it commercially because of its legacy.

Proponents of H.R. 503 will try to convince us that owners who sell their horses in auctions unknowingly sell them to representatives of the processing facilities, with no knowledge that the horse would be processed. Common sense tells me that if these sellers don't want their horses sold for processing, they would not sell them at high bidder auctions. But, if this is indeed a serious problem, Congress could simply pass legislation requiring that horse auctions make all sellers aware that their animals could potentially be bought for processing. Simple disclosure laws will render that argument moot.

Some will claim that horse processing needs to be banned because the horses suffer during transport and the slaughter process and others will claim that horse processing encourages horse thievery. The former is not based in fact. With respect to the latter, just because cattle rustling has been around since the birth of the Republic does not mean we should outlaw the processing of cattle. The same is true of horses. Current federal laws require that horses must be transported and processed humanely, just like cattle. Both of these arguments raise the issue of enforcement. Thus, the solution is to enforce current federal law, not pass a new, draconian one.

While proponents of H.R. 503 have many arguments about why this process needs to be banned, they remain silent about the unintended consequences of this bill. I believe chief among those unintended consequences is that horse owners will not have a humane option to dispose of a horse that is either unwanted or unable to be cared for. In 2005, around 90,000 horses were processed in the U.S. If there was another viable option for these horses, clearly they would not have been sent to the processing facility. This is particularly true for a number of struggling family farmers. If this bill were to become law, it would mean that when a working horse is at the end of its useful life, it will turn into a liability instead of an asset for the family farmer. No one should come to this floor bemoaning

the plight of the family farmer and vote for this bill.

Another unintended consequence is the precedent that we set by prohibiting the processing of livestock for any compelling reason other than we don't think it should be processed. This is a slippery slope issue. As a Congressman who represents a district where—in some counties—the cattle overwhelmingly outnumber the people and more importantly provide a living for many of my constituents, I am particularly fearful that one day a similar movement will make the argument that cattle are no longer appropriate for processing for human consumption. While it may seem far fetched, with passage of H.R. 503, we will have set a precedent that it is permissible for Congress to ban the processing of livestock for non-scientific and non-health reasons, providing those who wish to ban the processing of cattle a legal leg to stand on with either Congress or the Courts.

However, my opposition to H.R. 503 does not mean that I am not mindful of the concerns of those who live near a horse processing plant. In fact, I am extremely mindful of these people because some of them are my constituents, as I have the privilege and honor of representing the people of the City of Kaufman in Congress, which is home to one of the three horse processing plants. I believe that most of my constituents in Kaufman who are in favor of H.R. 503 are in favor, not so much because they believe Congress should criminalize horse processing, but because it means a plant in their backyard that they do not like will be closed. Many believe it is a public nuisance and a strain on the city's infrastructure. I certainly understand those reasons for supporting H.R. 503 more than those offered by Members who do not have one of these plants in their district. However, those reasons fall under the purview of local government, not the federal government.

That is why I am respectful of the decision made by the City of Kaufman and its zoning commission to order the plant closed due to it being a public health hazard. However, I do not believe that Congress should be exercising its authority and infringing upon freedom by passing H.R. 503, simply because of the City of Kaufman's bad experience with the horse processing plant. There might be a community out there that would welcome a horse processing plant and the jobs it could bring, even with the potential negative aspects associated with such a facility. Passing H.R. 503 would take the decision as to whether or not to allow a horse processing facility away from local, elected officials, and keep a local community from welcoming a plant and its jobs.

There is no doubt that a horse is a wonderful animal. For those who do not wish to process a horse, no one is forcing them to do so. In the end, I believe that it is more important to protect the freedom of livestock owners to humanely decide the fate of their livestock than it is to surrender to emotion and ban the processing of horses. This is America. We should love horses but we should love freedom even more.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT L. COLE

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Robert L. Cole upon his retirement as the president of Peoples State Bank located in Madison Heights, Michigan.

Bob Cole has served as president of the Peoples State Bank for 10 years during which time this community bank grew from \$202 million in assets and 5 branches into a vibrant financial institution with \$500 million in assets and 12 branches in the southeast Michigan area.

Under Mr. Cole's leadership, the bank has played a major role in the local community. When a fire destroyed the municipal garage of Madison Heights in 2003, the bank donated \$5,000 for a portion of the destroyed equipment. The bank extended loans to non-profit organizations in the Detroit area assisting young people to obtain marketable work skills, provided loans to a non-profit community organization for building improvements to its Head Start program as well as donated over \$100,000 to various organizations that support affordable housing, low-income health care, food banks, homeless shelters, and small business development centers.

Bob Cole's career tracks the development of community banking in Michigan. Born in Howell, Michigan, and raised on a family farm, he graduated from Western Michigan and went to work as a banker in Fenton. In 1974, he became president of the First National Bank of Fenton. In 1987, he became president of the State Bank of Fenton and took it from \$62 million in assets to \$225 million. In 1996, he joined Peoples State Bank as president and CEO. In that role he modernized the institution, grew the bank into new communities, at the same time deepening the commitment of Peoples to serve the ethnic and small business markets of the Detroit Metropolitan area.

Bob Cole was attracted to community banking because of his strong sense of community. His involvement includes: past president of the Fenton Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, board of governors of the Fenton Community Center, Fenton Community Foundation, Madison Heights and Hazel Park Chambers of Commerce, past president and board member of the Michigan County Bankers, member of the Michigan Association of Community Bankers, and the Michigan Bankers Association. He is a recipient of the City of Fenton "Man of the Year" award.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of the 12th Congressional District have benefited from the leadership of Bob Cole in the field of community banking and I rise to pay tribute to his career and wish him good health and much happiness in his retirement.

HONORING FATHER JOSEPH
WEITENSTEINER

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Father Joseph

Weitensteiner in honor of his retirement after almost 50 years of service to the Morning Star Boys Ranch. Through his dedication to the Morning Star Boys Ranch, and the greater Spokane community, nearly 1,300 boys have benefited from the care and oversight he has given them through the services offered by the ranch.

Father Weitensteiner's career began in 1957 when he became the ranch's first counselor. After completing studies for the priesthood, Father Joe was ordained on May 14, 1966, and was soon named Morning Star director. As director of the Morning Star Boys Ranch, many recognized Father Joe as the reason why the ranch has earned an excellent reputation for turning around the lives of hundreds of young men.

Throughout his five decades of service, Father Joe has not only been recognized for his leadership by his colleagues and Morning Star alumni, but has also been honored by numerous civic, educational, legal, and child care entities.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Father Joseph Weitensteiner for his leadership in our community and to thank him for the significant role he has played in mentoring and leading the many young men who have lived at the Morning Star Boys Ranch. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Father Joe as he celebrates nearly 50 years of exceptional service to our community.

HONORING JEFFREY MESTON

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise with pleasure today to honor Jeffrey Meston, one of our community's heroes. He is retiring as Chief of the Fire District in Novato, California, where his service to both the department and community has been an inspiration to all who worked with him.

Jeff started his career in 1976, working 10 years in Corte Madera and 20 in Novato. He became Chief of the Novato Fire District in 1999. His commitment to the community, to professional excellence, and to all firefighters is evident in his work. Locally, he has been president of the Marin County Fire Chief's Association and the Rotary Club of Ignacio as well as Treasurer of the Novato Chamber of Commerce. On the State level he serves as the chair of the Legislative Task Force and an Area Director for the Fire Districts Association of California and the Training Section Chief for the California Fire Chiefs Association. He is also nationally recognized as a course developer and speaker.

If you could hear him speak, as I have, you would understand why he is in high demand. In November, 2003, Jeff organized a moving memorial service for one of his own, Steve Rucker, a Novato firefighter killed battling wildfires in Southern California. He then related how he had taken Steve under his wing and added, "Steve was probably the most genuine, decent and straightforward human being I've ever known. There were never any hidden agendas with Steve—qualities which made him easy to tease, but easy to love like a brother . . . I never knew anyone who wanted to be a firefighter as much as Steve. Steve lived and breathed his dream."