

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FAIR AND EQUAL HOUSE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

**HON. TOM DAVIS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2007*

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, today I am re-introducing with my colleague Representative ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON the District of Columbia Fair and Equal House Voting Rights Act. This legislation has now been considered through several Congresses. It is no longer a novel idea. Nevertheless, the need for this legislation is stronger than ever and I call on the Congress to pass it without delay. We can't credibly struggle to make other parts of the world safe for democracy if we continue to deny it to residents of our Nation's Capital.

This bill pairs two injustices in such a way as to create a politically neutral solution for both. The first injustice—that the citizens of the District of Columbia have no direct representation in the House of the United States Congress—has existed since Congress took away representation in 1800. The second injustice—the failure to count all of the residents of Utah in the last Census—is more recent. Historically, it takes just this kind of marriage to create a viable solution.

We had a great deal of success in moving this bipartisan legislation last Congress. In our committee, a strong majority of both parties voted to pass this legislation. Over the last 3 years, it has been gratifying to watch members of my own party consider the problem and accept this solution. We now have the support of conservatives, moderates, and liberals. Unfortunately, we were unable to get the bill to the floor in the rush that ensued last December.

Ironically, it was a rush to pass legislation that created this problem in 1800. In the lame duck session following the election of Thomas Jefferson of Virginia as president and the Whigs to the majority in 1800, Federalists rushed to pass legislation to set up some structure for the District of Columbia. Congress was silent on District voting rights in spite of having granted voting rights to District residents 10 years earlier in the Residence Act that created a Federal district.

Now, over 200 years later, Congress has before it a principled and workable compromise solution. This bill does two simple things. It treats the District of Columbia as a congressional district for the purposes of representation in the House of Representatives, and permanently increases Congress to 437 members.

After 3 years of research, it is clear that Congress does have the authority to grant the District a seat in the House of Representatives. This House, which we refer to as the "People's House," represents the people of the several states. Some scholars have tried to parse the phrase to mean that state residents only are represented.

But when this phrase was drafted there was no Federal District. The "People of the Several States" means all Americans.

Congress has recognized this by allowing Americans living overseas to vote in House elections despite the fact they are no longer residents of any state. Overseas Americans are allowed to vote in their last state of residence even if they never intend to return to that state.

There always seems to be some reason to keep from doing a good thing. In our personal lives we all put off the easy act of common graciousness because we're busy or because we're tired or because someone treated us unfairly. This makes sense at the time, but in the end we are all poorer for missing the opportunity.

The same is true with this legislation. Maybe you don't like the permanent increase in the size of Congress. Maybe you want to protect "states rights" in redistricting. Maybe you wish this addressed the Senate as well. Maybe you just don't know for sure what the Sixth Congress intended when they created this problem.

I would ask every member of this body to look up for a minute and look at the people we live with here in the District. Is there anything really gained by refusing them direct representation in the Federal Government? I say no.

It is time to make a change in the way this District is governed. It is time to tell the 550,000 District citizens that we recognize their inalienable right to participate in the decisions that affect their lives every day.

Let's not—once again—miss the chance to do the good thing. Justice should no longer have to wait.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MR.  
PETRO JAMES ROUSSOS

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2007*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, Mobile County and indeed the entire State of Alabama recently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor him and pay tribute to his memory. Mr. Petro James Roussos, known as "Pete" to his many friends and family, was a devoted family man and dedicated community leader throughout his life.

Although he was originally from Seminole, OK, Pete spent the majority of his life in Mobile. He attended Murphy High School, where he played football and was elected to the All-City Squad. He received about a dozen scholarship offers before choosing to attend Auburn University, where he went on to play football on the 1954 and 1955 teams. He also was a member of the Theta Chi fraternity at Auburn. He finished school in 1958 graduating from Troy State University.

Not long after graduation, Pete began what was eventually to become a long and storied

career in the restaurant business. In 1963, he opened Pete Roussos' Bonanza Lounge on U.S. 90 near the Skyline Shopping Center. In 1965, he moved from Mobile to Alexandria, LA, where he opened McDonald's Restaurant franchises in Pineville and Lafayette, LA. After returning to Mobile in 1982, he owned and operated, with his uncle, the popular Pier 4 restaurant on the causeway for a period of time. His other businesses included Crabby Pete's in Gulf Shores and Pete Roussos' Restaurant on Azalea Road.

Pete Roussos was the kind of man who would give you the shirt right off his own back. He spent his lifetime working hard and making a name for himself and his family. It is a name not soon to be forgotten in the First District, much less any other place he ever lived. He had the type of personality that would make any restaurant successful. His aura permeated throughout the room and left customers feeling at home and comfortable whenever he was near.

Besides his love for the restaurant business, Pete was also an avid sportsman. He was affiliated with the Coastal Conservation Association of Alabama and was a big supporter of the Alabama Wildlife Foundation. He was an original member of the Mobile Big Game Fishing Club, a supporter of Ducks Unlimited in Mobile, and a major supporter of the Ducks Unlimited Organization in Alexandria during the late 1970s and early 1980s. He was also a member of the American Kennel Club-Mobile Retriever Club from 1962 to 1980.

Madam Speaker, I rise today and ask my colleagues to join with me in remembering a dedicated community leader and friend to many throughout south Alabama. Pete Roussos loved life and lived it to the fullest, and his passing marks a tremendous loss for all of south Alabama. He will be deeply missed by many, most especially his wife, Sandra Mitchell Roussos; his two sons, Petro James Roussos, Jr., and Nicholas James Roussos; his daughter, Alexa Kyriaki Roussos; as well as countless friends and loyal employees that he leaves behind.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this difficult time.

LET'S REMEMBER OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE ON THREE KINGS DAY

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Three Kings Day holiday, which is traditionally celebrated on January 6.

For millions around the world, especially Latinos, the final curtain on the holiday season doesn't begin to fall until January 6, Three Kings Day. From El Barrio through Mexico and the Caribbean all the way down to the tip of South America, communities find their own

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