

a fundamental question of coverage. All workers, including skilled and professional workers, have the right to organize. The RESPECT Act does not allow true supervisors to engage in organizing or collective bargaining. But it ensures that those individuals who are excluded from the NLRA's protections due to their supervisory status do indeed carry the genuine prerogatives of management. I urge all of my colleagues to stand with me as we fight to return these fundamental protections to millions workers who deserve the chance to win livable wages, fair benefits, decent working conditions, and a brighter future for their families.

HONORING STEPHEN TRACHTENBERG AS HE STEPS DOWN AS PRESIDENT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, when I graduated from George Washington, I like to sometimes think only a few years ago, I did not realize that I would be so involved with the school later in my life. President Trachtenberg has made these efforts a joy and an honor, and we will miss his leadership.

His tenure as president transformed the university, marking major advancements across the board. Since taking the helm in 1988, the academics of GW have skyrocketed. The SAT scores of incoming students rose by 200 points and a significant percentage of students are now drawn from the top 10 percent of high school classes.

While enriching the academic environment at George Washington, President Trachtenberg also enhanced the financial situation. The school enjoyed a balanced budget under each year of your tenure, generating an endowment of nearly \$1 billion, up almost \$800 million since you started in 1988.

As Steve has often noted, GW has eight schools, over 100 programs, and nearly 20,000 students. And he adds, "GW is more than a university, it is also a community." Through his outstanding efforts, the university encompasses academics, research, entertainment, and an enjoyable experience for students, faculty and staff.

In total, 30 years of his amazing career went into leading a major university. He deserves more time at home, applying his energy and talents to his personal life. I understand his wife Francine is retired, but still very active in promoting the community's interest, and I bet she could use his help.

It has been an honor to work with President Trachtenberg on behalf of George Washington University—his tireless efforts have yielded immeasurable results—the school, Washington, D.C., our nation, and the world are better because of them.

JUDICIAL DISCLOSURE
RESPONSIBILITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 1130, the "Judicial Disclosure Responsibility Act," because it extends until December 31, 2009, the authority conferred by the Congress on the Judicial Conference to redact personal and sensitive information from the published financial disclosure reports of judges and judiciary employees who have been threatened or otherwise have particular security risks.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated, H.R. 1130 would temporarily extend the authority of the Judicial Conference to withhold from disclosure certain personal and sensitive information of judges and judicial employees. In addition, the bill expressly provides that concern for the safety of a judge's family as well as that of the judge is sufficient grounds to exercise the authority given. The bill, however, requires the Judicial Conference to provide detailed reports regarding such redactions to Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the financial disclosure requirements were imposed by Congress in 1978 in response to the constitutional issues surrounding the Watergate crisis and the resignation of President Richard M. Nixon. The Ethics in Government Act was passed in 1978 and promotes ethics and openness in government by establishing rules of conduct for federal employees to reduce corruption and prevent the improper use of knowledge gained while employed by the government, and more broadly to prevent the appearance of impropriety.

The Ethics in Government Act of 1978 ("Act") applies to all branches of government, including the federal judiciary. Persons covered by the Act are required to disclose personal and financial information each year, including the source and amount of income, other than that earned as employees of the United States government received during the preceding calendar year. They must also disclose the source, description, and value of gifts for which the aggregate value is more than a certain minimal amount received from any source other than a relative; the source and description of reimbursements; the identity and category of value of property interests; the identity and category value of liabilities owed to creditors other than certain immediate family members; and other financial information. Under the Act, these reports are made public.

Among the types of sensitive personal information that might be disclosed in these reports are personal residences, the workplace of spouses, the name and location of a child's school; and an employee's vacation home.

In 1998, 20 years after the enactment of the Ethics in Government Act, the potential of these types of disclosures to place individual judges at serious risk of personal harm had become manifest. In 1979, U.S. District Court Judge John Wood, Jr., was fatally shot outside of his home by assassin Charles Harrelson. The murder contract had been placed by Texas drug lord Jamiel Chagra, who was awaiting trial before the judge.

In 1988, U.S. District Court Judge Richard Daronco was murdered at his house by

Charles Koster, the father of the unsuccessful plaintiff in a discrimination case. The following year, U.S. Circuit Court Judge Richard Vance was killed by a letter bomb sent to his home. The letter bomb was attributed to racist animus against Judge Vance for writing an opinion reversing a lower-court ruling to lift an 18-year desegregation order from the Duval County, Florida schools.

In light of these and other tragedies, Congress responded by adding a new subsection to the Ethics in Government Act temporarily authorizing the Judicial Conference to redact information from judges' financial disclosure reports under certain circumstances. Under that subsection, a report may be redacted "(i) to the extent necessary to protect the individual who filed the report; and (ii) for as long as the danger to such individual exists." The Act further charged the U.S. Judicial Conference, in consultation with the Department of Justice, with the task of submitting to the House and Senate Committees on the Judiciary an annual report documenting redactions.

In 2001, the House of Representatives approved a bill striking the sunset clause and making the redaction authority permanent but the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee did not concur. The Senate was concerned that such authority could hamper the effectiveness of the judicial confirmation and oversight process by unwarranted reliance on the redaction authority to avoid revealing stock holdings and other financial assets, and in some cases, the complete withholding of all financial information contrary to the intent of the statute. Ultimately, Senate recommended extending the redaction authority for 4 more years, until December 31, 2005. This authority has now expired and necessitates the extension provided by H.R. 1130.

Mr. Speaker, the Judiciary Committee considered and properly rejected permanently granting this authority to the Judicial Conference because of the legitimate concern that such authority could be abused in such a way as to withhold information that properly should be disclosed. A temporary 4-year extension, on the other hand, would effectively allow for a more in-depth investigation of areas of concern before Congress must decide whether to make the authority permanent. I believe this is the most prudent way to proceed.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 1130 because it preserves an important means of protecting the safety of those who work in the federal judiciary. Particularly in this age of the global war on terror, the danger faced by federal judges, judicial officers, and court personnel is real, as illustrated by the three murders noted above. The recent and tragic murder of U.S. District Court Judge Joan Humphrey Letkow's husband and mother reminds us that the danger has not abated.

For all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 1130 and urge by colleagues to do likewise.

186TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 186th Anniversary of Greek Independence Day.

After nearly four centuries of occupation by the Ottoman Empire, Greece declared her independence on March 25, 1821. This was not only a victory for the people of Greece but it was a victory for democracy.

Ancient Greece was the cradle of democracy, free thought, and free will. Our Founding Fathers modeled our nation's first laws after the teachings of such influential Greek scholars as Plato, Socrates and Aristotle. Greece's liberation in 1821 ensured that these democratic ideals would survive for perpetuity.

Today, we honor the ancient Greek influence on our country and we celebrate the mutual respect and beneficial relationship between our two nations. In every war in the 20th century, our countries fought side by side because we both understood the importance of spreading freedom throughout the world.

Because of our common history, shared values and commitment to democratic principles, the friendship between the U.S. and Greece will continue to grow.

I am proud to be able to honor Greece today as she celebrates 186 years of renewed freedom and I look forward to working with this spirited nation in the years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I missed rollcall vote 178 on H.R. 740, the Preventing Harassment through Outbound Number Enforcement (PHONE) Act of 2007. Had I voted, I would have voted "yea."

NATIVE AMERICAN METHAMPHETAMINE ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 545 because it corrects an inadvertent oversight in the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 and strengthens the arsenal available to Native American tribes as they combat the scourge of methamphetamine. I thank the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee for his work in expediting this legislation, the "Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement Act of 2007."

Mr. Speaker, last year Congress enacted the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 as Title VII of the USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005. Included in the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act were provisions that authorized funding for three important grant programs within the Department of Justice: (1) The COPS Hot Spots Program; (2) the Drug-Endangered Children program; and (3) the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders program. Although Indian tribes and territories were included as eligible grant recipients under the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders program, they were unintentionally left

out as possible grant recipients under the COPS Hot Spots Program and the Drug-Endangered Children Program. H.R. 545 allows Indian tribes and territories to combat the methamphetamine epidemic by applying for and receiving funding under all three of these grant programs.

Mr. Speaker, as great a threat as it is to the Nation at large, the methamphetamine threat is even greater in Native American communities. Studies of past year methamphetamine use have shown that Native American communities have more than double the methamphetamine use rate of other ethnicities. According to surveys performed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Office of Law Enforcement Services, over 70 percent of Indian tribes identified methamphetamine as the drug that posed the greatest threat to their reservation and also estimated that at least 40 percent of violent crime cases investigated in Indian Country involve methamphetamine in some capacity. That is why we must act to ensure that Native American tribes are eligible to apply for and receive funding to protect their communities from methamphetamines.

The COPS Hot Spots Program authorized \$99 million in funding to the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in combating methamphetamine production, distribution, and use, and to reimburse the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) for properly removing and disposing of hazardous materials from clandestine methamphetamine laboratories. This funding may also be used to clean up methamphetamine laboratories, support health and environmental agencies, and to purchase equipment and support systems.

The Drug-Endangered Children Program authorized \$20 million in funding to provide comprehensive services and training to law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, child protective services, and health care services to assist children who live in a home in which methamphetamine has been used, manufactured, or sold. The specific dangers faced by children who live at or visit drug-production sites or are present during drug production include:

Inhalation, absorption or ingestion of toxic chemicals, drugs or contaminated foods or drink that may result in respiratory difficulties, nausea, chest pain, eye and tissue irritation, chemical burns and death;

Fires and explosions resulting from dangerous methamphetamine production processes;

Abuse and neglect by parents who often binge on methamphetamine and traumatic consequences that result; and

Hazardous living conditions (firearms, code violations, poor ventilation and sanitation).

The Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders Program authorized as much funding as may be allocated to facilitate collaboration between the criminal justice, child welfare, and substance abuse systems in order to reduce the use of drugs by pregnant women and those with dependent children. While Indian tribes and territories were included as eligible applicants, clarifying language is needed to ensure that there is adequate coordination with Tribal service providers.

Mr. Speaker, surveys conducted by the BIA also revealed that too often Tribal police forces that are underfunded and understaffed. According to the same survey, 90 percent of

Tribal police forces indicated that they needed additional drug investigation training, while 69 percent of Tribal respondents indicated that they had no access to, or funding for, methamphetamine treatment resources or facilities.

The Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007 seeks to ensure that, consistent with tribal sovereignty, Indian tribes and territories can apply for the COPS Hot Spots and Drug-Endangered Children grant programs, just as states can, and also ensures adequate coordination with tribal service providers for tribes receiving funds under the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders Program.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 545 corrects an inadvertent oversight in the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 and strengthens the arsenal available to Native American tribes as they combat the scourge of methamphetamine. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MARK KEESECKER

HON. DAVID DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a true friend of the First District of Tennessee, Mark Keesecker, who passed away Saturday, March 17.

Mark Keesecker lived a life that was filled with entrepreneurship, enthusiasm, and compassion.

Mark was a member of First Baptist Church in Erwin and attended Christ Fellowship in Kingsport.

After graduating from East Tennessee State University, Mark made remarkable achievements in real estate sales, and was an example of professionalism for all of his colleagues. Mark attained some of the highest awards in the Nation for his work in real estate, which included the Century 21 Corporate Centurion Award that is earned by only 5 percent of agents in the Century 21 system.

Throughout all of his success, he was a humble and gracious gentleman. Mark was known for giving supplies to local schools and giving money to various charities.

He left a positive impression on those that he encountered. Mark was a very close personal friend of mine and his unexpected passing is a great loss to the First District.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the House join me this evening in offering our sympathies to the family and friends of Mark Keesecker. He was an illustration of determination, purpose, and kindness.

His friendship and dedication is greatly appreciated, and he will be deeply missed.

TRIBUTE TO DR. AND MRS. JAMES DOBSON

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. and Mrs. James