

Mr. Shugert also acted as an important liaison between government officials and area residents during the floods that devastated parts of New Jersey in 2000. More recently, he was instrumental in disseminating information during the difficult removal of the Intrepid Museum from Pier 86 in New York, for its reconstruction in Bayonne, New Jersey.

In addition, Mr. Shugert has offered his unwavering support to the Elizabeth River Arthur Kill Watershed Association Earth Day Celebration. The event teaches hundreds of students about the importance of protecting our environment.

Please join me in recognizing Peter Shugert for being the most loyal of civil servants. I congratulate him and wish him continued success in future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LEGAL EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION ACT

HON. BRAD ELLSWORTH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Legal Employee Verification Act and ask for its consideration and support. This bill overhauls the broken employment verification system we have today and replaces it with the mandatory, efficient, and transparent process our country needs.

Today, too many working men and women are denied the job opportunities they deserve because it is more convenient for some employers to go around the system and hire an illegal immigrant. Employers who break the law should be held accountable, and the Employment Eligibility Confirmation System created by this bill will make it more difficult to evade our employment regulations. At the same time, business owners who play by the rules every day can rest assured that they are competing on a level playing field.

Instead of dealing with a confusing process that often yields inconclusive results, if any, employers will quickly know the status of their prospective employees. Within as little as one day, an employer will know whether that person is eligible to work here in the United States. This efficient system will bring peace of mind to both employers and employees by giving definitive answers in reasonable periods of time.

In addition, the Legal Employee Verification Act makes use of the technology used in our nation's immigration documents.

This critical security upgrade currently helps fight identity fraud and gives security officials a new tool to protect our country from those who seek to do us harm. Now this upgrade will also discourage illegal immigrants from using falsified documents to secure jobs here, giving our law-abiding workforce a fair shot at every job available.

I don't fault people for wanting to come to live and work in America. It's a great place to live and raise a family. All I ask is that they do it legally.

Madam Speaker, it's time we get serious about enforcing our immigration and employment laws. The Legal Employee Verification Act will give us important new tools to do just that. It's common-sense policy, and I'm proud to introduce this bill for consideration.

HOMEGROWN TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT OF 2007

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, as Chair of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing & Terrorism Risk Assessment, today I am introducing the bipartisan Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007. Ranking Member DAVE REICHERT joins me as co-author of this bill.

April 19th marks the 12th anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing, which claimed 168 lives and injured over 800. Only September 11, 2001, eclipses that dark day as the deadliest act of terrorism on U.S. soil.

My own district in California has not been spared from the threat of homegrown terrorism. An episode there offers a chilling illustration of the type of domestic threat we face. In the spring of 2005, four men—three U.S. citizens and one Pakistani national residing legally in this country—finalized plans for a series of gas station robberies intended to finance terrorist attacks around Los Angeles. Their kill targets were U.S. military bases and recruiting stations, the Israeli Consulate, synagogues filled with worshippers on Jewish holy days, and the El Al ticket counter at LAX.

The indictment alleges the men were pawns of an inmate at Folsom Prison who had embraced radical Islam after being incarcerated and founded the militant prison gang "Assembly of Authentic Islam." One of them was radicalized by the inmate while doing time at Folsom; his accomplices were recruited from a local mosque and had no criminal records.

The men engaged in a spree of 11 armed gas station robberies until their arrest by local police in July 2005. A subsequent search of their apartment uncovered jihadist literature, bulletproof vests and a list of potential targets. Local police promptly contacted the FBI, which led to a major investigation involving more than 200 agents, Los Angeles police detectives, and counterterrorism officials.

The suspects now await trial, and are charged with conspiring to wage war against the U.S. government through terrorism; kill members of the Armed Forces; and murder foreign officials.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has said that "radicalization is a global problem that must be addressed through focused efforts targeting its root causes." This legislation does just that. It would establish a grant program to provide funds to the States to foster badly needed vertical information sharing down to the local level. It would create a Center of Excellence for the Prevention of Radicalization and Home Grown Terrorism to examine the social, criminal, political, psychological, and economic roots of homegrown terrorism and to propose solutions. It would require Homeland Security officials to learn from other nations that have experienced their own Oklahoma City tragedies. And, perhaps most importantly, it would ensure that our cherished civil liberties, the protections and safeguards guaranteed by our Constitution, are protected.

We urge its enactment.

FREEDOM FOR ALFREDO MANUEL PULIDO LÓPEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about Dr. Alfredo Manuel Pulido López, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Dr. Pulido López is an independent journalist and a member of the Christian Liberation Movement. Before he became a human rights activist and a leader in the pro-democracy movement in a country oppressed by a totalitarian tyrant, he worked as a dentist. In 1998 he was forced from his job because of his support for democracy and the rule of law. In 2001, Dr. Pulido López joined the "El Mayor" news agency in Camagüey, Cuba to expose the despotism and corruption of the tyranny as an independent journalist. He wrote on all aspects of totalitarian Cuban society and contributed to numerous foreign press agencies because he wished to make known the true nature of the regime that enslaves Cuba.

On March 18, 2003, as part of the regime's deplorable island wide crackdown on peaceful prodemocracy activists, Dr. Pulido López was arrested because he wrote the truth about a ruthless and repressive tyranny. After a sham trial, where he was accused of "endangering independence and the state's territorial integrity" and of "writing tendentious articles on various aspects of national and provincial life," Dr. Pulido López was sentenced to 14 years in a totalitarian dungeon.

On April 18, 2006, Rebecca Rodriguez Souto, Dr. Pulido López's wife, visited her husband and was immediately alarmed by his condition and the severity his deterioration. According to a report she filed with the Committee to Protect Journalists (CJP), Dr. Pulido López is dangerously malnourished, deeply depressed, and having great difficulty breathing. Since his incarceration he has lost over 40 lbs and he finds it difficult to consume the grotesque food fed to the political prisoners. Despite his seriously declining health, Dr. Pulido Lopez continues to be caged in a totalitarian dungeon, sharing its squalor with at least 100 hardened common criminals. He has witnessed innumerable acts of violence and he must continually fear for his life.

Also fearing for her husband's life, Rebecca Rodriguez Souto has repeatedly requested that the tyranny release her husband on medical parole. She has yet to hear a response from the brutal tyrant's machinery. Dr. Pulido López himself has stated that he has no real reason to ask for medical parole since he is an innocent man to begin with, and that what the dictatorship's officials really have to give him is his freedom. To his wife he has explained that with every day he is firmer in his convictions, that he will not renounce them, and that "they (the tyranny) can do what they want."

Dr. Pulido López was arrested because of his belief in liberty. His commitment to freedom, in the face of his declining health and the regime's complete and utter disregard for human rights and dignity, is a testament to the heroism of the Cuban people. It is abominable that just 90 miles from our shores Castro's

subhuman gulags are full of men and women, like Dr. Pulido López, who represent the very best of the Cuban nation.

Madam Speaker, we must speak out against this unconscionable crime against humanity. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate release of Alfredo Manuel Pulido López and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KYLE
ROBERT WILSON

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Kyle R. Wilson and to recognize his service to our community.

I come to the floor to speak of the bravery exhibited by Technician Wilson who served on the Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue since January of 2006. Technician Wilson and his unit from Occoquan-Woodbridge-Lorton (OWL) Station 12 in Woodbridge responded to a three alarm house fire early on the morning on April 16th, 2007. Tragically, he was killed in the line of duty while heroically attempting to save the lives of others.

Kyle was a longtime resident of Prince William County and attended C.D. Hylton High School in Woodbridge, VA where he was a star baseball player for the Bulldogs. The bravery Kyle demonstrated Monday was typical of his personality. His former baseball coach described him to have all the qualities of a leader, specifically that he was fearless and willing to make sacrifices for others. Due to this strong character and devotion to community, it was no surprise to his coach that Kyle found his calling as a firefighter.

Upon graduation from Hylton, Kyle went on to study athletic training and earned his degree from George Mason University in 2005. He joined the fire department in January 2006, graduating from the recruit academy that June. Assistant Prince William County Fire Chief Kevin McGee described Kyle as an "outstanding young man, who was one of the best of our best." Kyle is survived by his father Bob, mother Sue, brother Chris, sister Kelli, and his girlfriend Kristi Silor.

In my experiences with the department, I have seen its unwavering dedication to the Prince William County community. Kyle was an example of Prince William's finest. Every day firefighters selflessly put their lives on the line to save others, and Kyle made the ultimate sacrifice. Let us never forget the sacrifice he made.

Madam Speaker, in honoring Kyle I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women that put their lives on the line and bravely serve on the Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue. I extend my heartfelt condolences to Kyle's family, friends, and to his brothers and sisters on the department.

"EXPANDING THE PROMISE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM ACT OF 2007"

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I want to express my strongest support for the "Expanding the Promise for Individuals with Autism Act of 2007," H.R. 1881, and I was very pleased to join my friend and colleague Rep. MIKE DOYLE of Pennsylvania this week in introducing this important legislation. H.R. 1881 addresses a very critical need—to provide assistance to the 1.5 million Americans with autism who are in desperate need of treatments and services throughout their lives.

From my first session in Congress in 1981, I have been a consistent advocate for individuals with developmental disorders, including autism. But autism came into a particularly strong focus in 1998, when two of my constituents, Bobbie and Billie Gallagher of Brick, NJ, contacted me with concerns about an elevated level of autism cases in the township of Brick. The concerns of the Gallaghers—parents of two autistic children themselves—led me to request that the Federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, conduct an investigation into a possible autism cluster in Brick.

The results of this investigation, one of the first federal studies on autism, were quite alarming. Higher rates of autistic disorder and autism spectrum disorders, ASDs, were found in Brick Township relative to rates from previously published studies. However, we have now come to learn that the high rate of autism found in Brick Township was not an isolated incident; it was the window to a nationwide phenomenon.

Earlier this year—on February 8, 2007, the CDC released groundbreaking data documenting the high prevalence of autism around the country. As a result of this landmark study, it is now believed that 1 out of every 150 children born in the United States suffers from a form of autism.

The numbers are even more shocking when you examine the results from New Jersey. Autism was shown to affect 1 in every 94 New Jersey children analyzed in the recent federally funded study. That same study, based on 2002 data, showed that 1 in every 60 boys in New Jersey is afflicted with a form of autism.

While the numbers are profound, it is the reality of the lives behind the numbers which call for our compassion, dedication, and legislative action. The physical, emotional, and financial impacts of autism on individuals, families, and society are staggering. Autism can overwhelm families, as their lives become consumed with the considerable challenges of identifying appropriate biomedical and psychosocial treatments, schooling and other needed support systems for their autistic child—and eventually for an autistic adult. Most of the parents of an autistic child whom I have met express a high level of fear and apprehension about services—such as housing and employment assistance—that will be available when their child becomes an adult.

That is why I joined forces with my friend Mike Doyle to launch in January 2001 the

Congressional Coalition for Autism Research & Education, C.A.R.E., which currently includes over 160 Members of Congress. The goals of the bipartisan Coalition for Autism Research and Education are straightforward, to: increase general awareness of autism and autism spectrum disorders among Members of Congress and policy analysts in Federal government; educate Members of Congress on current and future initiatives and developments regarding autism; serve as a forum where autism-related policy issues can be exchanged, debated, and discussed; bring together public, private, and government entities to pursue legislative initiatives that will help improve the lives of individuals with autism and their families; and promote all means to assist with the challenges of families and loved ones affected by autism.

Although it is still not sufficient, we have had significant success in advocating for increased funding for autism programs—funding that has increased by nearly 10 times the amount it was in the mid-1990s. In 1995, NIH invested about \$10.5 million into autism research. The estimated budget for autism research in fiscal year 06 is nearly 10 times that amount—\$108 million. At the CDC, autism funding has increased from \$287,000 in 1995 to an estimated \$15.1 million in 2006.

By introducing the "Expanding the Promise for Individuals with Autism Act," EPIAA, we are building on our progress over the past decade and particularly on some legislative accomplishments during the last Congress. Many members of the C.A.R.E. caucus joined in supporting and passing last December the "Combating Autism Act," important legislation which focused on improving autism-related research funded through the National Institutes of Health, autism surveillance, and early screening and diagnosis. Also last year, the caucus was successful in securing in the Fiscal Year 2007 Department of Defense Appropriations bill \$7.5 million in an Army research account for the purpose of improving treatment of individuals with autism.

Notably, these successful efforts to date have focused primarily on surveillance and biomedical research. While these efforts are absolutely critical, the reality is that we have approximately 1.5 million individuals in the U.S. with autism, and they and their families are in desperate need of services to assist them in their daily lives and to help individuals with autism to realize their full potential as members of our communities. Today, we are focusing our efforts on providing services to aid families facing the challenges of providing lifetime care for their autistic children from first diagnosis through adulthood.

The "Expanding the Promise for Individuals with Autism Act of 2007," which was earlier introduced in the Senate and which we introduced this week in the House, is comprehensive legislation which authorizes approximately \$350 million over 5 years to provide treatments and services across the lifespan. It is incumbent upon us to act now to pass this legislation that will facilitate the provision of treatments and services for autistic individuals throughout their lives. As provided for in this legislation, assistance needs to be largely community-based and needs to address early intervention, education, employment, transportation, housing, health, and recreation.

Also, very importantly, the mechanisms authorized in this legislation are designed to provide treatments and services effectively and