

me today in recognizing San Jose State University's sesquicentennial.

INTRODUCING THE PILOTS
EQUITABLE TREATMENT ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to introduce the Pilots Equitable Treatment Act, legislation that would prevent deep, unfair cuts in pilots' retirement benefits.

Over thirty years ago, Congress established the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation to insure the pension benefits of American workers. When employers terminate their workers' traditional pension plans, the PBGC takes the plans over and makes monthly payments to plan participants who are retired.

When the PBGC takes over a company's pension plan, the plan participants do not always receive the same benefit they would have received if their plan had not terminated. For example, workers who retire before age 65—which the law considers “normal” retirement age—receive reduced benefits to reflect the longer period that these retirees likely will receive benefits.

This is bad news for pilots. Under Federal Aviation Administration rules, airline pilots are required to retire at age 60. As a result, pilots whose pension plan has been terminated—like the pilots at United Airlines and US Airways—wind up taking drastic cuts to their pension benefits because the PBGC treats age 60 as an early retirement age and cuts pilots guaranteed benefits as a result.

The federal government is responsible for trapping pilots in this double-bind. The PBGC and the FAA are both federal agencies, but because their rules don't align, pilots are forced to pay the price. Pilots earn every dime of their pension benefits and they don't choose to retire at age 60. The time to fix this problem is today.

The Pilots Equitable Treatment Act would put airline pilots on equal ground with other workers by requiring the PBGC to treat age 60 as the normal retirement age for pilots—not as an early retirement age. In other words, pilots would receive the maximum PBGC benefit for which they would be eligible if they worked until age 65. If they worked until the age of 57, it would be as if they worked until age 62 and the pilot would receive the appropriate PBGC benefit.

In a 2005 e-hearing Tom Gardiner, of Bainbridge Island, WA, facing the loss of his retirement nest egg at United Airlines, explained the conundrum facing pilots—

“My name is Tom Gardiner and I am a Captain for United Airlines with a total of 27 years of service. . . . If the PBGC takes over the pilots' defined benefit plan, I will lose at least 2/3 of my promised pension. . . .

[One factor] contributing to this huge hit is the adjustment for “early retirement” mandated by PBGC rules. Of course, I have no choice in the matter; the FAA regulations require me to retire at age 60. The PBGC considers that to be “early” and takes away 35 percent of what I would otherwise receive from them. It is a classic “Catch 22.22 . . .”

Captain Gardiner is not alone. The Pilots Equitable Treatment Act would be a first step to restoring some measure of fairness to these hardworking Americans who have seen promised and hard-earned benefits disappear overnight.

TRIBUTE ON THE RETIREMENT OF
JOHN CONSTANCE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to John Constance, who last week retired from the National Archives after 35 years of Federal Service.

For 14 years, John served as the National Archives liaison to Capitol Hill, supervising congressional relations, public affairs, communications, and the agency's web program.

A native of Baltimore, Maryland, John joined the Archives after graduating from the College of William and Mary in 1972.

He served in a number of managerial positions with the agency, including Director of Policy and Program Analysis, and the Chief of Product Acquisition and Marketing for the National Audiovisual Center.

In addition, Mr. Constance served in extended details to both the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Education during his career, managing public affairs projects for both agencies.

I am personally grateful to John for all the expertise and assistance he provided to me in the early 1990s during a time of extraordinary transformation for the National Archives, particularly when it established a second facility in College Park, Maryland to accommodate the growing volume of historical materials and improve services to researchers.

This state-of-the-art facility, which has become known as “Archives II,” is a treasure to anyone who believes that a nation cannot progress unless it first understands its past. The historically significant records it maintains literally document the history of our great nation, and will serve as primary sources for countless scholars of history, culture, politics, and science for generations to come.

All of us who embark on careers in public service hope that when the day comes to move on to other pursuits, we will be remembered for the good works we have rendered to the American people. John will be remembered for, of all things, his part in advancing our nation's sacred duty to remember its always rich, often glorious, and sometimes controversial history.

IN MEMORY OF CECIL JENNINGS

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend, a dedicated coach, and a committed educator, Mr. Cecil Jennings, for his loyal service and devotion to the youth of America.

As a public school teacher and coach, Cecil possessed an unwavering dedication to the

community, the children of the public school system, and to any young person needing his help or his guidance.

Cecil was born in 1934 and lived in the Great Bridge area of Chesapeake, Virginia. A graduate of Great Bridge High School and East Tennessee State University, he began his teaching career in 1957 at Deep Creek High School and taught there for two years. He then went on to teach at his alma mater, Great Bridge Junior High School, and worked as a physical education teacher and also coached football, track, wrestling and softball. Cecil also participated as a baseball and basketball coach in recreational leagues and umpired Little League baseball games. He retired from Great Bridge High after 36 years of service to the community. However, even after his retirement he continued to be the personification of school pride and school spirit for the “Wildcats” of Great Bridge.

In life, Cecil always carried himself with a positive attitude towards life and was well-known as an honorable individual with a big heart. He was well-respected by parents and people in the community. As a coach, Cecil had a philosophy that no one was cut from the team; he couldn't stand to cut his players because he saw in every child who had the willingness to try, an opportunity for success down the road. When he coached junior high football, usually 65 young men dressed for each game. “Coach Jennings” gave each child he coached the opportunity to be a winner, and carried that legacy throughout his career. Cecil mentored many students who, through his encouragement and devotion, found success in their education and in their lives. The stories of lives he touched and helped mold seem endless.

Towards the end of his life, Cecil battled cancer, diabetes and severe arthritis. Even as he aged and his health deteriorated, he continued to nurture, encourage and support his family, friends, and the local sports teams. In one of his last visits with a close friend, he reflected upon the happiness and joy he felt for his family and his community. Even through his pain, his selfless compassion continued to shine.

Cecil Jennings was a mentor, an honorable public servant and a dear friend to all who crossed in his path. I offer my sincerest condolences to his wife, Beth, their three children, Greg, Cecil, and Cissy, and five grandchildren, Brittany, Hailee, Alex, Christopher, and Emma. Cecil may no longer be with us, but the impact he made upon the community he loved is imprinted with the continuing legacy of thousands who made “Cecil's Teams” and whose lives were better for having done so.

RECOGNIZING RYAN JAMES
CHESHIER FOR ACHIEVING THE
RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ryan James Cheshier, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 270, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.