

I am also pleased with the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs FY 08 funding because it includes funds for mental health centers. I have continually advocated for increased access to mental health care by returning veterans through the science committee.

This bill also grants the Veterans Administration request for administrative functions, including operation of Veterans Administration Medical Centers, quality of care oversight, informational technology—hardware and software, legal services, billing, coding activities, and procurement.

Funding for administrative functions is especially important to decreasing claims backlog for veterans waiting for disability and other benefits by adding more than 1,100 new claims processors. The funding also makes five polytrauma centers and three Centers of Excellence for Mental Health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) fully operational this year. These centers will afford care for those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Subsequently, sufficient funding for procurement and billing activities is in particular important to Dallas, since the Dallas Veterans Administration actively encourages large businesses to partner with small businesses through subcontracting plans.

This bill makes available resources to support military construction projects and ensures America's servicemen and women have more effective training facilities, and better housing, health care and day care facilities. I would like to take this opportunity to once again commend my colleagues, Congressman EDWARDS and Chairman OBEY for providing a comprehensive Military Construction and Veterans Appropriations for FY 2008 possible.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BOB WILLIAMS ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE WAVE TRANSIT SYSTEM

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 19, 2007*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise today to recognize the outstanding service and leadership of Bob Williams on the occasion of his retirement after 35 years of service in public transportation. For the past 6 years, Bob has served Mobile as the general manager of the Wave Transit System.

Bob began his career in Peoria, Illinois, as a bus operator and rose to assistant general manager. In 1988, he was selected to be assistant general manager of the Transit System in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he served for 12 years.

In 2001, Bob came to Mobile and was responsible for the overall management of day-to-day operations. He oversaw the opening of the renovated GM&O building and helped coordinate relief efforts during Hurricanes Dennis and Katrina. Bob forever changed the face of public transportation in Mobile—new carriers, the MODA, user-friendly routing, neighborhood pick-up service, comfortable rider stations, litter free bus rides, and increased ridership.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in commending Bob Williams for his

tireless service to public transportation in Mobile. I know Bob's colleagues, his family, and his many friends join with me in praising his significant accomplishments and extending thanks for all his efforts on behalf of the citizens of the First Congressional District.

HONORING RODOLFO AND DORA MIRABAL FROM CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

**HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 19, 2007*

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the accomplishments of two pioneers in the national Hispanic community, and their home in south Texas. Rodolfo Zepeda Mirabal, Sr., and Dora Cervera Mirabal, were two activists and organizers in the Corpus Christi community who answered the call of patriots and did much to make our community a better, more transparent, place to live.

Rodolfo was among the original founders of the League of United Latin American Citizens, LULAC, and in the 1920s he began publishing his own Spanish-language newspaper, called *El Demócrata*. In the 1930s Dora began an annual publication of a traditional form of Mexican satirical verse for *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead or All Souls Day).

Always civically engaged, Dora founded a bilingual school called *El Círculo de Nuestros Amigos Para Los Estudiantes Bilingües*, which operated at the Mirabal Printing Company and helped Spanish speakers learn English. She became the first female member of the Corpus Christi Mexican Chamber of Commerce, and served as an officer in the Corpus Christi Ladies' LULAC Chapter.

Together Rodolfo and Dora operated Mirabal Printing Company in the heart of the Mexican-American community of Corpus Christi.

In 1938 the couple began publishing a weekly, full-size Spanish language newspaper in Corpus Christi, *El Progreso*, which kept the community informed for 41 years. This paper not only served as a crucial resource to the Hispanic community for local, national, and international issues, but it tried to give the Mexican-Americans in the Coastal Bend inspiration and a voice.

Following Rodolfo's death in 1968, Dora Cervera Mirabal continued work on *El Progreso* until she died of cancer on December 4, 1979. The Mirabals were succeeded by three children: Rodolfo, Jr.; Rosie; and Robert, all of whom carry on the family's printing business today.

Rodolfo and Dora Mirabal were "lost giants" in the advancement of the Mexican-American civil rights movement who inspired not just my generation, but generations to come.

I ask the House of Representatives to join me today in remembering this extraordinary couple and their outstanding record of civic service to the city of Corpus Christi and the south Texas community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 19, 2007*

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, on Friday, June 15 until the end of the legislative day, I was home in Georgia due to an unexpected medical condition of a family member. As a result, I missed a number of votes. Had I been present, I would have voted the following:

"Aye" on the McHenry 2nd Degree Amendment to the Fox Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 466).

"Aye" on the Fox Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 467).

"Aye" on the Fallin Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 468).

"Aye" on the Drake Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 469).

"Aye" on the King (NY) Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 470).

"Aye" on the Brown-Waite Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 471).

"Aye" on the Burgess Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 472).

"Aye" on the Ferguson Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 473).

"Aye" on the McHenry Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 474).

"Aye" on the Pearce Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 475).

"Aye" on the Carter Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (rollcall 476).

"Aye" on the McCaul (TX) Amendment No. 98 to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Rollcall 477).

"Aye" on the King (IA) Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Rollcall 478).

"Aye" on the Bilbray Amendment to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Rollcall 479).

"Aye" on the McCaul (TX) Amendment No. 99 to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Rollcall 480).

"Aye" on the Rogers Amendment No. 2 to H.R. 2638, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Rollcall 481).