

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF DR.
ELIZABETH BALRAJ

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Elizabeth Balraj as she retires after 35 years of dedicated public service to the people of Northeast Ohio, including 20 years as Cuyahoga County coroner.

Dr. Balraj began her career in the 1960s, immigrating to the United States to become a physician and surgeon after completing her studies in her native India. She practiced medicine at Akron General Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital in Cleveland before coming to the Cuyahoga County Coroner's Office as deputy coroner and pathologist. In 1987, she was appointed Coroner of Cuyahoga County, following the retirement of Coroner Dr. Samuel Gerber, a position she held until her retirement in July of this year.

During her time as Coroner of Cuyahoga County, Dr. Balraj established herself as a very capable and energetic leader. She worked very hard with local law enforcement officials to help solve murder cases and was there to console the many people who lost loved ones. Additionally, she advanced the cause of women in the medical field by blazing the trail for women to become more involved in science and medicine, as well as the law enforcement field.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Dr. Elizabeth Balraj or her service to Cuyahoga County, her passion for her work, and her kindness to the many families and individuals of Cuyahoga County over the last 35 years.

AFFIRMATION OF THE UNITED STATES RECORD ON THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE RESOLUTION

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I have noted in recent days that some of my colleagues have asked to have their names removed from the list of those cosponsoring House Resolution 106. I have not asked to be removed as a cosponsor because I still strongly support the goals of the Resolution, and believe that it is important to acknowledge the atrocities committed against the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire do indeed constitute genocide.

While I support the message of the Resolution, I have recently signed a letter asking that it not be brought to the House floor at this time. While the Armenian genocide is a tragic part of history, in the present there are Amer-

ican soldiers fighting and dying in Iraq. Regrettably, Turkey has responded to this Resolution with threats that would endanger the safety of those soldiers and make it more difficult for us to quickly and safely bring our troops home.

I know that my friends in the Armenian community have worked very hard over the years on behalf of this Resolution, and I know that they will be disappointed if its passage is delayed. However, they will be no more disappointed than I am about the fact that more than four years after the President launched his misguided war in Iraq, our troops are still in harm's way.

HONORING CIRCUIT RIDER PRODUCTIONS

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Circuit Rider Productions, a non-profit corporation that has harmonized the work of providing human services for at-risk youth with a mission to help restore and sustain Sonoma County's ecological resources. The work done by Circuit Rider Productions has been of immense value to the community of northern Sonoma County.

Circuit Rider Productions was founded in 1976 by Fred Beeman and Ed Kissam with the mission to reach out to people and places in need of help. The organization's original project took a Federal grant and taught young people to use video production technology and to film a documentary about a project which employed low-income youth to plant trees. The fusion of job training, youth services, and environmental restoration formed the core of services that Circuit Rider Productions has continued to offer in the 30 years since.

The organization is currently comprised of two divisions: Resources and Programs for Youth Family and Community; and the Center for Ecological Restoration and Stewardship. The first set of programs work with youth in northern Sonoma County on issues such as drug and alcohol abuse and gang activity. Through no-cost community counseling, programs in schools, and court referrals, young people who are at risk for substance abuse or involvement with gang activities receive help from the various Circuit Rider programs focusing on life and communication skills, self-confidence building, and responsible decision making.

The Center for Ecological Restoration and Stewardship focuses on providing landowners and communities with the information they need to make sound decisions about watersheds. Through an analysis program and ecological restoration services, the organization can provide the training necessary to help get these projects off the ground. With a particular emphasis on controlling invasive species and restoring native species, Circuit Rider has

been a leader in responsible environmental restoration.

Madam Speaker, it is appropriate that we congratulate Circuit Ride Productions for the many wonderful contributions this organization has made to our community. By taking a comprehensive approach to working with at-risk youth, and providing more than abstract job training, they have bettered the lives of countless young people while providing important and scientifically sound guidance in ecological restoration.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS FOR SEPTEMBER 11TH VICTIMS ACT

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of nine of my colleagues to introduce the Procedural Fairness for September 11th Victims Act. This bipartisan legislation is an identical companion to a bill introduced by Senator BIDEN and passed by the Senate earlier this month.

We offer this legislation in response to a shortcoming in the Federal rules of civil procedure that has the unintended consequence of restricting witnesses from appearing in civil lawsuits involving September 11th claims.

Six years ago, Americans came together to support one another in a time of national crisis. The attacks on September 11, 2001 affected all of us, in all walks of life and in every State across the country. However, for those who were injured or lost loved ones on September 11th, geography is playing a major role in their ability to seek compensation.

Shortly after September 11th, Congress mandated that victims and their families who opted out of the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund and chose to pursue civil suits could only do so in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. According to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, parties can only subpoena testimony and documents within 100 miles of that district. As a result, many victims and their families cannot bring the witnesses or documents they need for their cases.

In response, the Procedural Fairness for September 11th Victims Act will amend the Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act to provide for nation-wide subpoena power to all parties involved—victims, their families and the defendants—when litigating 9/11 claims.

Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues agree that justice requires that the parties to cases arising under the Victims Compensation Fund have access to all the testimony and documents relevant to their claims, regardless of where in the U.S. the witnesses or documents are located. Therefore, I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor the Procedural Fairness for September 11th Victims Act and call

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

upon the leadership to move this legislation as soon as possible.

RECOGNIZING MR. CHAD BLOCK
FOR HIS HEROIC ACTIONS

HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Chad Block, businessman and volunteer firefighter, for his heroic acts on the afternoon of March 24, 2007.

On this date Mr. Block passed by a car accident where a box van was on fire on Route 202 in Bucks County, PA. Acting quickly, Mr. Block positioned his vehicle to prevent other cars from reaching the fire. Suddenly, the fuel tank exploded on the box van sending it down the road toward an outlet store full of customers and workers.

Without hesitation or regard for his own life, Mr. Block pulled a wheel chock from his own truck and placed it under the wheel of the burning van stopping its movement. Moments later, as the heat from the burning van overcame the wheel chock; the burning van began to move again down the road. Without hesitation, Mr. Block placed his own truck in the path of the burning van until fire crews could secure the van and extinguish the fire.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Block's bravery goes above and beyond what we expect from our citizens; but as a dedicated volunteer firefighter with concern for the safety of his community, he acted fast and with great daring. He acted without regard to his own life to ensure the safety of others. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Chad Block for his heroism.

CONGRATULATING THE DALAI
LAMA UPON BEING AWARDED
THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD
MEDAL

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Dalai Lama upon being awarded the prestigious Congressional Gold Medal of Honor.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the nation's highest and most distinguished civilian award. The honor must be approved by at least two-thirds of the Members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate in order to be awarded. Over 100 awards have been conferred since its creation in 1776, including recipients General George Washington, Winston Churchill, and Nelson Mandela.

His Holiness, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, has exemplified the spirit of the award, demonstrating tremendous compassion and tolerance. Through his selfless advocacy of peace and human rights, the Dalai Lama has lived as an example of what one committed individual can accomplish. His efforts to better the lives of the Tibetan people have not gone unno-

ticed, and I am truly honored to play a role in this special day. I would like to thank my colleagues for joining me in honoring His Holiness, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MS. HELEN SPENCER AS THE CITY CLERK OF FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is with great honor that I rise today in recognition of Helen Spencer, who for the last 40 years has engaged in committed, dutiful service to the City of Fort Walton Beach, FL, as the City Clerk.

Helen Spencer's dedication to the City began in 1967 when she became a secretary in the Fort Walton Beach Police Department. In 1970, she was promoted to stenographer. In 1974 and for the next 7 years she was a high level secretary, and on April 29, 1981, she was promoted to Executive Secretary for the Fort Walton Beach Police Department. When the position of City Clerk of Fort Walton Beach was vacated she was quickly chosen to fill the spot as interim city clerk. After only a few months of service to the City, the City Council asked her to fill the position permanently.

As the city clerk, Mrs. Spencer manages a multitude of functions. She oversees the official City records, prepares City elections, manages the city's leases and deeds, and prepares countless minutes and agenda packages for the City Council. However, Mrs. Spencer's dedication to the community ranges beyond her occupation. She participates on the Local Issues Committee, the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, and serves as vice president of the Sugar Beach Sertoma Club.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Helen Spencer on her 40th anniversary with the City of Fort Walton Beach, FL. Mrs. Spencer truly possesses an extraordinary understanding and a unique perspective of the City's history. She is a committed, innovative, and loyal resident of Fort Walton Beach, and we are forever grateful for her service.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL ON PROTECTING CONSUMERS THROUGH THE PROPER FORBEARANCE PROCEDURES ACT OF 2007

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the bill entitled the "Protecting Consumers through Proper Forbearance Procedures Act of 2007", which I am introducing today. This legislation is intended to correct persistent problems in procedure created by two words in the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

Section 10 of the Communications Act permits a telecommunications carrier to file a petition with the Federal Communications Commission, FCC, asking the FCC to forbear from applying certain statutory or regulatory requirements to it. The FCC may grant forbearance if it finds that doing so is in the public interest.

It is certainly within the prerogative of Congress to create a statutory regime that permits a regulatory agency to forbear from applying a statutory requirement, so long as the agency finds that consumers will continue to be protected and well served. The problem in this circumstance is that the statute states that the carrier's petition will be "deemed granted" if the FCC does not act within a prescribed timeframe. In other words, if the clock runs out before the FCC has reached agreement on the merits of a petition, the petition is automatically granted.

This untenable situation must be corrected. It can and has led to undesirable results.

First, the FCC last year permitted one forbearance petition to be "deemed granted" without issuing an accompanying written order, thereby making it impossible for Congress or the courts to ascertain the scope of relief granted or the legal rationale supporting the agency action. In this situation, which could easily occur again, it is difficult for Congress to conduct proper oversight of the implementation of the Communications Act, as well as oversight of the telecommunications industry.

Second, the "deemed granted" language results in unsound decision-making at the FCC. Faced with contentious, complicated issues as set forth in these petitions, the FCC now routinely waits until the last possible minute—in some cases literally the 11th hour—to make a rushed decision. All the while, during the FCC's deliberations, the threat of an automatic grant of forbearance from statutory provisions hovers over the proceedings. Such a disjointed process is not likely to result in public policy that benefits consumers.

This bill simply removes the "deemed granted" language from the statute. Carriers are still free to seek forbearance, and the FCC may still grant forbearance where appropriate. But the "deemed granted" language must be removed to safeguard the ability of Congress and the courts to conduct appropriate oversight, to protect consumers, and to restore transparency to the decision-making process.

IN RECOGNITION OF LAKEWOOD
HOSPITAL

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of Lakewood Hospital, which has proven to be a leader in northeastern Ohio's health care community.

Founded in 1907, Lakewood Hospital provides high quality and innovative treatment to more than 130,000 patients annually from throughout Cuyahoga County. The hospital's affiliation with the Cleveland Clinic and other regional hospitals offers individuals access to state-of-the-art technology and individualized care.