

him as one of their own. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to wish Richard Paul Ellis a happy 100th birthday, and I wish him many more years of health and happiness.

RECOGNIZING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, DISASTER RECOVERY AND RELIEF EFFORTS IN SHELBY COUNTY

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and recognize the extraordinary contributions of emergency management, disaster response, and recovery personnel as well as elected officials and community leaders in my district which was devastated by the recent severe weather in Indiana.

I wish particularly to honor the Board of Commissioners and County Council, as well as these outstanding individuals in Shelby County:

Mike Schantz, Director, Emergency Management Agency

Michael Bowlby, Sheriff

Scott Furgeson, Mayor, City of Shelbyville

Bill Elliott, Chief of Police, City of Shelbyville

These areas suffered greatly from severe storms and weather, creating a catastrophe of nature that inflicted injuries, destroyed property, and displaced many of our citizens. In response, these officials went above and beyond the call of duty, showing great poise while saving many lives and serving the people of their communities.

Madam Speaker, I commend these fine men and women for their tremendous dedication to the Hoosier families, businesses, farmers and communities that they serve. As Hoosiers continue to recover from Mother Nature's fury, I feel confident that the people of Shelby County will be well served by these officials.

INTRODUCTION OF CRUISE VESSEL SECURITY AND SAFETY ACT

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act. This bicameral, comprehensive cruise safety reform legislation has been informed by 2 years of research and numerous Congressional hearings.

Madam Speaker, over 12 million Americans will travel on cruise lines in 2008. Within 5 years, that number is expected to reach 20 million. Unfortunately, few of these passengers fully appreciate how vulnerable they are to crime while at sea. Cruise ships, which operate under foreign flags of convenience, are not required under U.S. law to report crimes that occur outside of U.S. territorial waters. Citizens who are victimized often do not know their legal rights or who to contact for help in the immediate aftermath of the crime.

In recent years, the media has reported on a number of high profile cases of passengers

falling overboard, passengers gone missing and passengers being raped and sexually assaulted. Sadly, many of these cases remain unresolved.

My involvement in this issue began after a young woman from my district, Laurie Dishman, came to me for assistance after she had been a victim of a violent crime on a cruise ship. Laurie shared her shocking story with me in a letter 2 years ago. At its heart, this bill addresses the concerns brought to my office 2 years ago by my constituent, Laurie Dishman.

As a passenger on board a Royal Caribbean cruise ship, Laurie was raped by a crew member. One of the most disturbing aspects of Laurie's case is that the cruise ship on which she was raped had inadequate security staff. As a result, the cruise line promoted someone with no training to perform security personnel duties. If a real security guard had been on duty that evening, Laurie may have been spared her awful ordeal. The tragedy that ensued is something that Laurie will never forget.

Laurie was brave enough to report the incident to the crew authorities, even though they treated her poorly and with little sensitivity. She also reported the crime to the FBI. Unfortunately, the U.S. Attorney's office declined the case for prosecution just 4 days later.

I have since learned that there have been no convictions for rape cases on cruise lines in four decades. This statistic takes on a new meaning through the lens of Laurie's experience.

Laurie told her story at a Transportation and Infrastructure, Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee hearing on crimes on cruise ships. At the hearing she spoke of her experience and also ways to improve prevention methods, including: peep holes and security latches on stateroom doors; instituting sensitivity training for crew members; and ensuring more CCTV cameras in hallways.

After the hearing, I introduced the Protect Americans from Crimes on Cruise Ships Resolution on September 17, 2007, with Representatives CHRISTOPHER SHAYS and CAROLYN MALONEY. The resolution has over 30 co-sponsors.

The Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee held a follow-up hearing on September 19, 2007. We heard from other victims, some who were raped or assaulted while on a cruise; others who lost family members at sea. Unfortunately, we did not hear that the cruise lines had changed many of their standard operating procedures to reflect the previous hearing. In fact, just a few weeks before the hearing, a young woman had been raped on a cruise ship and was not given access to proper care.

These incidents beg the question: what is the process when a crime is committed on a cruise line and what recourse do victims have? The more Members of Congress have inquired, the more we have learned that there is no shortage of cases of rape, sexual assaults of minors, alcohol-related fighting and abuse, and persons overboard.

Most recently, Senator KERRY and Senator LAUTENBERG held a hearing on cruise safety. Less than a month before the hearing, a constituent of Senator LAUTENBERG's went missing while on a cruise, and was believed to have gone overboard. The family was not immediately

notified of the incident. This incident occurred 4 years after Ken Carver's daughter, Merrian, went missing on a Royal Caribbean cruise to Alaska. Since then, Ken has been instrumental in organizing victims to promote safety on cruise ships, including starting the International Cruise Victims organization and developing a 10-point program to improve safety on cruise ships.

Today, as a result of Mr. Carver, Ms. Dishman, and all of the many families of victims who have suffered so greatly, I am introducing a comprehensive reform bill with my esteemed colleagues CHRIS SHAYS, CAROLYN MALONEY, LLOYD DOGGETT and JOHN LEWIS to address the public safety concerns on cruise ships.

Our legislation seeks to improve ship safety, provide transparency in reporting, improve crime scene response, improve training procedures and enforce safety and environmental standards.

Improve Ship Safety. Our legislation would improve ship safety by mandating guard rails to reach 54 inches in height and entry doors of each passenger stateroom and crew cabin to have peep holes, security latches, and time sensitive key technology. Ship owners would be required to implement fire safety codes as well as technology to detect when a passenger falls overboard. Procedures would also be established to determine which crew members have access to staterooms and when.

Provide Transparency in Reporting. The legislation would establish a reporting structure based on the current voluntary agreement in place between the cruise industry, the FBI, and the Coast Guard. Additionally, each ship would be required to maintain a log book, which would record all deaths, missing individuals, alleged crimes, and passenger/crew-member complaints regarding theft, sexual harassment, and assault. The log books would be available to FBI and Coast Guard electronically, as well as to any law enforcement officer upon request. Statistical information would be posted on a public Web site maintained by the Coast Guard.

Improve Crime Scene Response. Each ship would be required to maintain antiretroviral medications and medications used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases after assault, as well as equipment and materials for performing a medical examination to determine if a victim has been raped. A United States licensed medical practitioner would be on every ship to perform the necessary examinations and to administer treatment. Private medical information would be protected, and would require written authorization for release. Additionally, all passengers would be given free, immediate, and confidential access to a National Sexual Assault Hotline and the FBI.

Improve Training Procedures. The legislation would establish a program designed by the Coast Guard and the FBI, and certified by the Administrator of the Maritime Administration, to train appropriate crewmembers in crime scene investigation. Each ship would be required to maintain one crewmember trained and certified under such a program.

Enforce Safety and Environmental Standards. The Coast Guard is authorized to dispatch personnel to monitor discharge of waste, to verify logbook entries related to waste treatment and disposal, and to act as public safety officers by securing and collecting evidence of alleged crimes. Additionally, the Secretary of the Coast Guard shall

conduct a study of passenger security needs and report findings to Congress.

Established Equitable Remedies. The bill also establishes fair and equal remedies for persons injured in boating disasters.

Madam Speaker, nearly all cruise ships operate under a foreign flag. U.S. citizens who are victimized onboard cruise ships often do not know their legal rights or who to contact for help in the immediate aftermath of crimes. Unfortunately, few U.S. nationals are aware that they are at risk of being the victims of crime while on their vacations. And, it is even more concerning that these victims have inadequate access to assistance or law enforcement in the aftermath of the crime. Cruises operate in a legal vacuum, where a lack of accountability empowers predators and obstructs their victims' pursuit of justice. That is an unacceptable situation, made worse by the cruise lines' own efforts to avoid scrutiny and accountability for their own handling of the security of their passengers.

My hope is that with increased Congressional oversight, the cruise lines will finally take these crimes seriously and enact necessary reforms. This comprehensive legislation will give Americans who are victims of crime on a cruise ship access to justice, and require that necessary steps are taken to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice. The legislation will also ensure that the cruise industry provides information to passengers about security risks and maintain necessary security personnel on each ship.

The Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act of 2008 addresses the ongoing safety concerns on cruise ships and will help ensure that the millions of men, women and children who cruise each year are informed, aware and safe on cruise ships. I urge all of my colleagues to cosponsor this important bicameral, comprehensive legislation.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY HEDLUND

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Special Agent Larry Hedlund as a recipient of the Iowa Law Enforcement Victim Service Award. The awards were created by the Federal Law Enforcement Victim Task Force of the U.S. Attorneys' Offices for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa.

Agent Hedlund was nominated by the Webster County Attorney's Office for his role in protecting a victim and successfully prosecuting the defendant in the State of Iowa vs. Perry Bender case. Agent Hedlund was able to gain the victim's trust and cooperation after she was threatened with physical harm by the defendant if she appeared for a deposition in the pending case. He used the information he gained from the victim to locate a digital recorder that included a conversation of the defendant threatening the victim. This evidence eventually led to the conviction of Mr. Bender.

Agent Hedlund's 20 years of dedicated service to the Iowa Department of Public Safety has made a positive impact on the lives of many victims caught in dangerous circumstances. His courage illustrates the compassion of Iowans; willing to risk his own safety for people in need.

I commend Special Agent Larry Hedlund for his outstanding service to his community and performance on the job. I am honored to represent Agent Hedlund in the United States Congress, and I wish him the best in his future work protecting the citizens of Iowa.

IN RECOGNITION OF LT. RON HAUGSDAHL

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lt. Ron Haugsdahl of the Fairfax County Police Department. Lieutenant Haugsdahl has helped lead the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force and has personally supervised the evolution of the task force from its beginning to today's nationally recognized unit dedicated to fighting gangs and crime. His tireless efforts coordinating the 15 participating agencies have led to marked achievements in the fight against violent gangs in northern Virginia.

Lieutenant Haugsdahl has served in the Fairfax County Police Department since 1993, and previously served in the city of Falls Church Police Department from 1986 to 1993 as well as in the U.S. Army as a military police officer from 1983 to 1986. Over his many years in law enforcement, Lieutenant Haugsdahl's duties have included patrol sergeant, gang detective, criminal investigator, and firearms instructor, in addition to his more recent leadership role with the task force.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to acknowledge today this fine public servant devoted to upholding the law and protecting the residents of northern Virginia. His service is greatly appreciated.

HONORING HOUSE FELLOWS

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the participants of the House Fellows Program on the completion of their weeklong program. As an initiative of the Office of the Historian, this program has been a unique opportunity for a select group of secondary education teachers of American history and government to experience firsthand how Congress really works. They were chosen because they were educators with demonstrated excellence in the classroom.

One of the goals of the program is to develop curricular materials on the history and practice of the House for use in schools. Each Fellow will prepare his or her brief lesson plan on a Congressional topic of their choosing, and these plans will become part of a teaching resource database on the House. During the school year following their participation in the House Fellows Program, each Fellow will have the responsibility to present their experiences and lesson plans to at least one in-service institute for teachers of history and government.

With plans to select a teacher from every congressional district over the next 4 years,

the House Fellows Program will be able to impact thousands of high school teachers and their students, providing an inside account of how the House of Representatives functions, energizing thousands of students to become informed and active citizens.

I had the honor of meeting the Fellows this week and know that all Members will join me in congratulating the following teachers who have successfully completed the program:

Ms. Gale Carter, East Chicago Central High School, East Chicago, Indiana (INO1, Visclosky); Ms. Jennifer Fine, New Canaan High School, New Canaan, Connecticut (CT04, Shays); Mr. Todd Hodkey, Wellington High School, Wellington, Ohio (OH09, Kaptur); Mrs. Amy Koelsch, Sterling Heights High School, Sterling Heights, Michigan (MI12); Mrs. Gerry Kohler, Wood County Schools, Wood County, West Virginia (WV01); Mr. Erik Korling, Willows High School, Willows, California (CA02); Mr. Steven Kwiatkowski, Clay High School, Oregon, Ohio (OH09); Ms. Evelyn Longino, Red River High School, Coushatta, Louisiana (LA04, McCrery); Mr. Jake Miller, Panther Valley High School, Lansford, Pennsylvania (PA11, Kanjorski); Mr. Tony Storch, Caldwell Academy, Greensboro, North Carolina (NC06, Coble); Mr. Jonathan Waldron, Mattawan High School, Mattawan, Michigan (MI06, Upton).

As many of my colleagues already know, the first bill I sponsored upon becoming a Member of Congress in 1999 was the History of the House Awareness and Preservation Act, which directed the Librarian of Congress to oversee the writing of a history of the House of Representatives. Once this bill was signed into law (P.L. 106-99), the Librarian of Congress very wisely chose the eminent historian and author, Dr. Robert V. Remini, to write the history, which was published in 2006 under the title of *The House*. The project was so well received that the Speaker of the House reestablished the Office of the Historian in 2005 and appointed Dr. Remini as the House Historian.

Madam Speaker, I would like to urge all of my colleagues to join me in thanking the Office of the Historian for sponsoring this program. Under the leadership of Dr. Remini and Dr. Fred Beuttler, along with their staff; Michael Cronin, Anthony Wallis, Andrew Dodge, and Dr. Charles Flanagan; interns George Dise, Parker Williams, and Mike Ferrin; the Office of the Historian is dedicated to fulfilling the goals of the History of the House Awareness and Preservation Act by conserving and presenting the history of the House of Representatives, the "People's House."

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT, AT THE 37TH COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY OF MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE, CUNY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Medgar Evers College of The City University of New York (CUNY) which recently celebrated its thirty-seventh Commencement Ceremony and to enter into the RECORD an article from the New York Carib News for the week ending June 24, 2008 titled