

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise to explain the reason for missing three votes on January 13, 2009. I was attending the swearing in ceremony for the 81st session of the Texas Legislature that took place yesterday in Austin, TX, where two former staff members from our office were sworn-in as newly elected State Representatives.

Carol Alvarado and Armando Walle were elected to represent Districts 145 and 140, respectively, on November 4, 2008. State Representative Alvarado worked in our office prior to working in Houston City Hall, and for the last six years as a member of the Houston City Council. Prior to being sworn in, State Representative Walle also worked in our office for over six years as Community Liaison.

Both these newly elected members of the State House have a tremendous record of service through their civic involvement, their time working for elected officials, and as elected officials. I wish them the best as they continue to serve the people of Texas in the State Legislature.

On the three votes I missed:

I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 41, Supporting the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month 2009;

I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 50, Honoring the life of Claiborne Pell, distinguished former Senator from the State of Rhode Island; and

I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 43, Recognizing the efforts of those who serve their communities on Martin Luther King Day and promoting the holiday as a day of national service.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. CHARLES
E. ALLEN

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the unsung heroes of the Intelligence Community. Mr. Charles E. Allen, who has ably and admirably served our Nation over the past fifty years, will soon retire from a long and legendary public service career.

Charlie began his career with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) back in 1958 and climbed the ranks from analyst to liaison to program manager and beyond. He was assigned to the Department of Defense in 1982 and became a senior adviser on strategic mobilization planning for the Secretary of Defense. He returned to the CIA in 1985 to take on the responsibility of National Intelligence Officer for Counterterrorism and, a year later, was appointed the first Chief of Intelligence for the CIA's Counterterrorist Center.

Charlie's depth of expertise and dedicated professionalism led to the position of National Intelligence Officer for Warning, where, in July 1990, he made his mark as the guy who accurately predicted Saddam Hussein's invasion of

Kuwait in August 1990. Dismissed as a contrarian by others within the CIA, the conclusions in Charlie's "warning of war" memorandum bore out his sharply analytic judgment.

In recent years, I have had the pleasure of working with Charlie as he undertook the Herculean challenge of organizing and integrating the Department of Homeland Security's intelligence programs and coordinating these activities with the Intelligence Community writ large. When he first came to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as the Chief Intelligence Officer and the Department's then-Assistant Secretary for Informational Analysis, Charlie worked tirelessly to focus resources on counterterrorism and find a new way to move forward in the aftermath of 9/11. For all of his efforts, Charlie was rewarded with an elevation to Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, where he continued to—and will continue to—mold, shape, and guide the identity of DHS's intelligence operation. He created the foundation for all who will come after him.

On one occasion in August 2007, Charlie came down to the University of Texas El Paso's Border Security Conference to speak on the critical area of diversity in the intelligence workforce. I was really excited to hear him speak, because I understood that he is a great speaker, and he certainly always has something of substantive importance. As it turned out, though, I never got to hear his speech, because my daughter went into labor with my third grandchild. Charlie was gracious and understanding about it, since he's a grandfather himself. Every time I see him, he remembers to ask about that grandson.

I would be remiss if, outside of his exemplary resume, I didn't honor Charlie for his singular commitment to our country. Charlie has proved himself a dedicated public servant with a reputation as a workaholic, intent on giving America his best. While he has been honored time and time again for his service, receiving the CIA's highest and most coveted award, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal, he neither seeks recognition nor expects accolades.

Charlie is a straight-shooter. He will always give you the truth. And I will deeply miss his leadership in the Intelligence Community.

CONDEMNING RECENT VANDALISM
AND THREATS AGAINST JEWISH
INSTITUTIONS IN CHICAGO

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise to draw my colleagues' attention to recent attacks on synagogues and Jewish day schools in my district and the Chicagoland area. These acts of intimidation and destruction are hate crimes, and I strongly condemn them.

On Saturday, January 10th, vandals shattered windows, broke down doors, and scrawled slogans including "Death to Israel" on Jewish synagogues and schools in the Chicago area, including Lincolnwood Jewish Congregation, Lubavitch Mesivta, Young Israel Synagogue of West Rogers Park, Congregation Anshe Motele, and Hanna Sacks Girls High School.

These recent attacks came just over a week after a Molotov cocktail was thrown at Temple

Sholom in Chicago, Illinois; and a bomb threat naming several area Jewish schools was mailed to the Ida Crown Jewish Academy. Local police are working with the FBI to determine if these attacks are linked.

Regardless of anyone's political views, attacks against religious groups, threats to schoolchildren, and the desecration of places of worship are contrary to the principles of religious tolerance upon which our country was founded and are serious crimes.

Similar crimes have been reported in other cities and communities across the country. In Knoxville, Tennessee, vandals threw rocks at two synagogues, smashing four stained glass windows. Signs supporting Hamas and comparing Israeli actions in Gaza to the Holocaust were reportedly posted at two synagogues in Irvine, California.

As a proud member of Chicago's Jewish community, I know that we are strong, vibrant, and resilient. The day after the vandalism, synagogue members put tarps over windows and returned to classes and other activities, while several hundred people gathered to denounce the attacks. Both the American Jewish Committee and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee have condemned the vandalism, and local and national groups, including the Jewish Federation of Chicago and the Anti-Defamation League, are working tirelessly in support of our community. I am proud that people of all religions in my district have come together to decry these hate crimes, just as they have come together in the past to condemn attacks on people of other religions.

Madam Speaker, what we have seen in Chicago in recent days goes beyond politically-motivated demonstrations. The intimidation and terrorization of the Jewish community is a hate crime, perpetrated against these institutions because of their religious identity. I hope that these prove isolated incidents and not a pattern of violence. I have every confidence that the police and FBI, working with the local community, will find and prosecute those responsible for these crimes.

HONORING MICHAEL MUSSER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor Michael Musser. Mr. Musser passed away on November 3, 2008.

Michael Musser was born and raised in Fresno, California. He graduated from Fresno High School in 1968. Just four years later he was married to Anna. They lived a happy life together. They have two children; Jason and Julie. His children and five grandchildren still live in the Fresno area. Mr. Musser was an avid golfer. However, if there was a family event, his family would always come first.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Michael Musser. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring his life and wishing the best for his family.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. CATHY BRYCE, HIGHLAND PARK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Cathy Bryce, the Superintendent of Schools of Highland Park Independent School District (HPISD) who stepped from this position on December 19, 2008.

After serving in various administrative roles in surrounding school districts, Dr. Bryce joined HPISD in July of 2001. In this role, she quickly demonstrated her ability to work with the community to develop a comprehensive education program and build broad based support for a large bond issue. She sought higher standards for student achievement and better school accountability. Dr. Bryce has a well earned reputation as an advocate for children and has made every effort to help children reach their fullest potential. Dr. Bryce's commitment to community service extends beyond parameters of the school district. She is actively involved in the Dallas YWCA, Dallas Museum of Natural Science, and the Park Cities Rotary Club among many other local organizations.

Madam Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in congratulating her and wishing her all the best in her future endeavors.

CAPITAL GAINS AND ESTATE TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2009

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, earlier today my colleague Representative MARK KIRK and I introduced the Capital Gains and Estate Tax Relief Act of 2009, a bill to extend critical tax cuts that will help middle-class families in my district and across the country.

If enacted, this legislation would make recent cuts to capital gains and estate taxes permanent. If Congress does not act, these tax cuts will expire at the end of 2010.

At a time when we so desperately need to encourage economic growth and investment, I believe it is wrong to raise these taxes.

Last month, the United States lost 524,000 jobs, bringing the total number of lost jobs in 2008 to 2.6 million. In December, unemployment rose to 7.2 percent, the highest rate since January 1993.

Arizonans, like all Americans, are feeling this pain and factoring the sluggish economy into their decision making. Home sales have slowed, small businesses are struggling and people are taking a hard look at their IRAs and 401Ks. With the economy weighing down important decisions about how, where, and when to buy a home or make other critical investments, Congress should not add to this burden by allowing capital gains and estate taxes to increase.

Several years ago, these tax cuts were championed by President Bush and a Repub-

lican Congress. Since then, the political winds have clearly changed. But in our haste to distance ourselves from the past, I implore my colleagues to give careful consideration to these tax cuts before dismissing them.

These tax cuts are sensible. They help millions of middle-class Americans, and making them permanent would make our tax code fairer and more predictable. They affect small businesses. They affect stockholders. They affect anyone who owns a home.

Unfortunately, when it comes time to buy or sell a home or stock or make other basic investments, these taxes often act as disincentives toward optimal financial decision making. At this difficult time, we need to keep these burdens as low as possible.

We need to incentivize investment and encourage growth, not penalize them.

Some have called for the outright elimination of these taxes. Still others have sought to rescind these tax cuts before they have a chance to expire.

Now more than ever, we must place pragmatism above partisanship, and do what is necessary to get our economy moving.

In 2007 and again in 2008, I voted against the Budget Resolutions, in part, because they failed to extend cuts to capital gains and estate taxes. At the time, I expressed frustration with both Democrats and Republicans for failing to work together to create a budget that incorporates good ideas from both sides of the aisle.

I believed then that we could do better, and I believe now that we must. So today, I challenge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the right thing for middle-class families, small businesses, stockholders, and homeowners. Consider this legislation, not on a partisan basis, but on its merits. Making these tax cuts permanent will help our middle class, and working together, I know we can make that happen.

RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF THOSE WHO SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES ON MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of National Service Day that is held on the third Monday of January each year, the same day that Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday is observed.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is well known for his peaceful march on Washington, D.C. where he delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech and other nonviolent protests. But as a minister and civil rights activist, his vision was to end discrimination and to improve the lives of all mankind. He focused on community organizing where he told others that they can make a change if they worked together.

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. it is important for people to get involved in their communities and give back to those in need. Volunteering at a food bank, helping to clean up a neighborhood, donating blood are simple ways that people can participate in National Service Day.

It is time for us to get involved to help others and to improve our nation as a whole.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unable to participate in three votes on the floor of the House of Representatives yesterday.

The first vote was H. Res. 41, supporting the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month 2009. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on that question.

The second vote was H. Res. 50, honoring the life of Claiborne Pell, distinguished former Senator from the State of Rhode Island. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on that question.

The third vote was H. Res. 43, recognizing the efforts of those who serve their communities on Martin Luther King Day and promoting the holiday as a day of national service. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on that question.

THE PREVENTION FIRST ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, today, I am again proud to introduce the Prevention First Act. I first introduced this legislation in the 108th Congress as an innovative approach to reducing unintended pregnancies. The Prevention First Act achieves this goal by providing comprehensive access to all forms of contraception and sex education.

If we want to reduce the number of abortions in this country, the methodology is clear—empower women to prevent unintended pregnancies through education and access to contraception. And, that is precisely what the Prevention First Act does.

Throughout the years, our conservative leaders have sought to limit women's rights and freedoms by imposing stricter penalties and enacting laws to criminalize doctors and women, when one is faced with an unintended pregnancy. Yet, these leaders have done very little to ensure that millions of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, STD, are prevented in the first place. If they are opposed to abortion, they should be for preventing unintended pregnancies and they should be for this bill.

By emphasizing prevention first, my bill will help protect women's reproductive health, reduce unintended pregnancies, decrease the spread of STDs, and give women the tools they need to make the best decisions possible for themselves.

It has been more than 40 years since the Supreme Court said women could access contraception. This decision was revolutionary in that it allowed women to control when to get pregnant and how many children to have. Access to contraception single-handedly improved women's equality in American society.