

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chair, I thank Chairman CONYERS and Chairman FRANK for their strong leadership in bringing this much needed housing and bankruptcy legislation to the floor.

The legislation is the result of the perseverance of many Members, especially BRAD MILLER, the original author of the legislation and Mr. COHEN of the Judiciary Committee.

I also commend ZOE LOFGREN, ELLEN TAUSCHER, and DENNIS CARDOZA for their compromise that is reflected in the manager's amendment. They have worked diligently to make improvements to the bill to ensure that homeowners will avoid bankruptcy whenever possible by first and foremost providing homeowners to a workable and accessible loan modification process.

EVERY 13 SECONDS

As Chairwoman LOFGREN has said, we have a foreclosure in America every 13 seconds.

Every 13 seconds, a family is uprooted, their children are forced to switch schools, their biggest investment—their home—is boarded up, increasing blight and reducing property values.

Each foreclosure represents nothing less than the end of an American Dream. But with this legislation—the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act—we can protect the American Dream and preserve it for America's families.

WHAT THE LEGISLATION DOES

This legislation will reduce the number of foreclosures by providing incentives for loan modifications that will permit families to stay in their homes on a long term basis.

It reforms the HOPE for Homeowners program to make it more workable for both homeowners and lenders.

In addition to providing incentives to lenders and servicers, this legislation, thanks to improvements that Members have worked on, also provides important incentives to homeowners to work with lenders and servicers to modify loans and to avoid bankruptcy—a painful and intrusive process for families. For those who cannot be helped, the legislation permits existing home mortgages to be judicially modified under the Bankruptcy Code, similar to the treatment of other real estate such as investment properties.

Finally, the legislation strengthens our financial system to foster the flow of credit necessary for home refinancing by making permanent the new \$250,000 deposit insurance limit for Americans' accounts in banks and credit unions.

PRESIDENT'S PLAN

This legislation compliments the President's recently announced Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan, which will help up to 7 to 9 million families restructure or refinance their mortgages to avoid foreclosure by refinancing or modifying their loans. Both the Obama plan and this legislation are long overdue steps to strengthen the housing market.

RESPONSIBILITY OF BORROWERS AND LENDERS

As we consider this legislation, we all agree on the principle that everyone bears a personal responsibility for their actions and their debts. This legislation upholds this principle.

Lenders must also act in good faith, responsibly lend to qualified homeowners, and work with homeowners who are at-risk of foreclosure because that is in the interests of lenders, borrowers, neighborhoods, and our nation's economy.

Yet, as 22 state Attorneys General recently noted, "many servicers . . . remain unwilling or unable to act, even when their own economic interests dictate otherwise."

CLOSE

When homeowners are unable to obtain relief, we must act to protect the American Dream of owning a home, to protect the neighborhoods ravaged by foreclosures, and to protect our economy, which has been ravaged by the decline of housing market.

Unless we address our nation's foreclosure crisis, more Americans will lose their jobs, will not be able to send their kids to college, and see their retirements savings continue to decline and disappear.

This bill helps homeowners, lenders, and neighbors. It is essential to our economic recovery. I urge my colleagues to take action today to stop foreclosures and help American families save their homes.

IN HONOR OF AL AND GLORIA NAHUM ON THEIR 60TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOE SESTAK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the love and commitment of two wonderful people who today will begin their seventh decade as man and wife. Since they first met at City College, New York and through peace, war, prosperity and hard times, Al and Gloria Nahum have devoted themselves to their country, community, faith, and most of all, their family.

As a young 2nd Lieutenant in our United States Army, Al Nahum courageously went to fight for his nation in the most violent and destructive conflict in the history of mankind. In the process he not only helped defeat fascism and stop the Holocaust, he earned for his bride to be and their children yet unborn, an era of prosperity and security also unrivaled in history. As World War II was resolved, Al

Nahum with a clear appreciation for the cost of freedom and the horror of war, bravely continued to stand watch for his family and his fellow Americans in the U.S. Army Reserve. When he retired as a Major, the Army lost a fine officer but Gloria, sons Robert and Kenneth, daughters Laurie and Debra finally had their hero safely home.

During Al's service Gloria was also fully engaged in making ours the greatest possible nation. As an exceptionally dedicated elementary school teacher, she consistently provided her students a level of skill and devotion few educators will ever match. But no accomplishment of Al and Gloria will ever be as special as the extraordinary people their children have become. That they are renowned physicians, and leaders in commerce and the media, their greatest achievement is that they and their spouses Roberta, Richard, Anne Marie and Christopher are as loving to their children as their mother and father are to them.

Madam Speaker, I ask that on this very special day this chamber join me in wishing the remarkable Al and Gloria Nahum, their children and their spectacular grandchildren Jennifer, Daniel, Tara, Brett, Jody, Jeffery, Mandy, Kelly, Brittany, David, Natalie and Reinhart all the love and happiness they so richly deserve. Surely there is no family more loving, accomplished and thoroughly devoted to one another. They are an inspiration to all who are blessed to know them.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF ATHLETIC TRAINERS IN OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the important and essential role that athletic trainers play in providing quality health care across our nation. Our nation's health care system is complex and every day people with many different health needs are served by legions of caring, qualified, and professional athletic trainers.

Athletic trainers are health care professionals who hold at least a bachelor's degree in athletic training. Almost 70 percent of athletic trainers have a master's degree or PhD. Athletic trainers are licensed health care professionals who provide injury prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation to patients of all ages.

Athletic trainers work under the direction of physicians to provide care to patients. Historically, they worked with athletes in secondary schools, colleges, universities and professional sports. Today, about 50 percent work outside of these athletic settings. Many athletic trainers are employed by clinics, hospitals, physician offices, commercial workplaces, the United States Armed Forces, and performing arts companies. The focus of athletic trainers'

• 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.

care is to prevent injuries and support patients and clients in their rehabilitation efforts to regain function as quickly and safely as possible.

Athletic trainers pass a national certifying exam. In most of the 46 states where they are licensed or otherwise regulated, the national certification is required for licensure. Athletic trainers maintain this certification with required continuing education. They work under a medical scope of practice, and adhere to a national code of ethics.

I strongly support the vital role athletic trainers play in our health care system. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing this important group of health professionals.

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS L. THOMPSON

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a community leader, Mr. Dennis L. Thompson, on his retirement after 36 years of service to the people of Kern County, California, most recently as Fire Chief of Kern County & Director of Emergency Services.

Chief Thompson began serving Kern County, which I represent, as a seasonal firefighter in 1970 at Station 55 (Mettler). On his first assignment, he burned both of his ears while containing a standing grain fire and although that experience made him question what he was doing fighting fires, he stuck with it. In 1973, Thompson became a full-time firefighter and began his training at Station 44 (Southgate). When he started firefighting, he drove vintage military surplus vehicles from the World War II and Korean War eras that were converted into fire trucks that were older than he was. Thompson also joined the ranks of the "Smoke Eaters" as firefighters back then were called because regulations did not require a breathing apparatus. "Thankfully", as Thompson says, departmental and state regulations were changed.

In 1975, Thompson started his full-time career in the Engineer position in Mettler, and in 1978, he was promoted to Captain for the Randsburg, Ridgecrest and Lebec areas. In 1981, Thompson suffered an on-the-job injury, while he was recouping, he returned to California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) to complete a 4-year degree. He returned to duty at Station 56 (Lebec) and graduated in 1983 with a Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration with honors. Thompson became Acting Battalion Chief in 1984 for Battalion 7, which covered northeast Kern County including the Lake Isabella and Ridgecrest areas. In 1985, he became Battalion Chief and Chief Training Officer for Battalion 2 and Battalion 5, which included southern and western Kern County. In 1986, Thompson completed his Master's degree in Public Administration from CSUB. In 1994, Thompson became the Deputy Fire Chief and oversaw Operations, Finance and Administration. In 2002, Thompson became a Chief Deputy at the Department, an Assistant Department Head.

In 2003, Thompson became Kern County's 10th Fire Chief and Director of Emergency Services. Serving as Fire Chief for six years,

Thompson oversaw the completion of many significant projects. Thompson reinstated Battalion 5 in August 2007 and made sure that Station 18 in Stallion Springs was open permanently, rather than seasonally for fire season. Thompson also increased minimum staffing levels from 2 to 3 person stations in all but one station. After 4 years of no equipment purchases, Thompson worked to acquire \$38.8 million in replacement apparatus and equipment to fulfill the needs of Kern County Fire Department. The capstone of Thompson's career was overseeing, from start to finish, the completion of the Emergency Operations Center that made Kern County's operational area preparedness capability state-of-the-art and viable for the future.

As someone who personally knows our local firefighting community well—my uncle previously held the post of Kern County Fire Chief, my father was an assistant Fire Chief for the City of Bakersfield, and during college I was a seasonal firefighter for the County—I am grateful for the service and leadership that Chief Thompson has given to the people of Kern County. I wish him well in his retirement, and I know he is looking forward to spending more time with his wife, Mary Jo, and their family.

HONORING AMERICA'S ZOO: THE PHILADELPHIA ZOO CELEBRATES ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHAKA FATAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. FATAH. Madam Speaker, I join with fellow members of the Philadelphia delegation in recognizing a milestone that is approaching for a Philadelphia institution that has brought joy and wonder to millions of the young and young at heart who have entered its storied gates while it provides a platform for education, conservation and world changing scientific research.

On March 21, 1859, Dr. William Camac, a legendary Philadelphia physician, led a concerned community of citizens, educators and scientists to charter the Zoological Society of Philadelphia—America's First Zoo—and house it on a bucolic, 44-acre property in Fairmount Park along the West Bank of the Schuylkill River.

Over the past century and a half, the Philadelphia Zoo has emerged as a national and global treasure. The Zoo is recognized as one of Philadelphia's most cherished, enduring and significant educational, scientific and conservation institutions and cultural attractions.

The Philadelphia Zoo was the site for breakthrough research that led to the award of the 1976 Nobel Prize for Medicine. From its inception, the Zoo has acted consistently and successfully to protect, promote, and preserve through its myriad research and curatorial activities numerous rare and endangered wildlife.

It is a venerable institution that has remained ever fresh and vital, constantly opening new and groundbreaking exhibits, acquiring and exhibiting exotic wildlife and pioneering conservation efforts that are the marvel of the zoological world. The Philadelphia Zoo has welcomed more than 100 million visitors—including millions of school children from

the greater Philadelphia community over generations—since its landmark gates opened to the public.

Now, 150 years young, the Philadelphia Zoo embarks upon the celebration of its sesquicentennial — an achievement of historic proportions for Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the nation and the world conservation community. In fact March 21, 2009, has been officially designated in my home town as Philadelphia Zoo Day.

As the Congressman who is honored to include America's First Zoo within my constituency, and as someone who has enjoyed numerous visits as a child, a father and a caregiver, I congratulate the Philadelphia Zoo and extend best wishes for continued success upon the occasion of its sesquicentennial.

A FINAL TRIBUTE TO LT. MICHAEL J. RENAULT

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, The City of Largo I have the privilege to represent paid tribute to one of their fallen police officers Saturday, when they laid to rest Lt. Michael J. Renault who died too early at the age of 37.

The love and respect the community had for Mike was evident as hundreds of his family, friends, neighbors and fellow officers turned out to honor his life and his valiant eight month battle against stomach cancer. They all recounted what a devoted family man Mike was as he and his wife Jennifer had three beautiful children—Hunter, Luke and Hannah.

Beverly and I had the opportunity to spend considerable time with Mike and his family these past few months and know that his wife and children were the center of his life. They were a source of great strength to him during his battle with an aggressive form of cancer.

We also know of the deep respect his fellow law enforcement officers in Largo and throughout the area had for Mike. Largo Police Chief Lester Aradi summed it up nicely in his eulogy Saturday saying, "The way he led and the values he taught will long live on with those he mentored on the force."

Mike's parents Rev. James and Judy Renault said Mike knew early on that he wanted to be a law enforcement officer. In fact, at 16 he chased down a thief who robbed the store where he worked. He joined the Largo Police Department soon after his graduation from college and moved up through the ranks quickly during his 16 years on the force and ultimately was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. He earned the Medal of Valor for saving the life of a suicidal man. More importantly, he earned the friendship, the trust and the abiding respect of those he served with.

Madam Speaker, following my remarks, I would like to include an article by Stephanie Hayes of The St. Petersburg Times entitled "Largo officer was tough man with soft heart" so that my colleagues can learn more about the special man that Beverly and I came to know.

Mike was a caring, compassionate and courageous man who fought valiantly until his final breath. He had life's priorities in order—

faith, family and the force on which he served. The people of Largo and the Largo Police Department lost a hero last week, but his memory, his strength and his core values will long live on in his children, his family, his friends and fellow officers. There can be no finer lasting tribute for a man who died long before his time.

[From the St. Petersburg Times, Feb. 26, 2009]

LARGO OFFICER WAS TOUGH MAN WITH SOFT HEART

(By Stephanie Hayes)

LARGO—Michael Renault was bagging groceries at a Winn-Dixie when his calling clicked.

A thief came into the store and robbed the cash register. Michael, always mischievous, always sneaking out of his window at night, sought adventure and feared nothing.

He also knew right from wrong. At 16, he took off chasing the bad guy.

He had cowboy instincts, raised on a diet of outer space westerns like Star Wars and Star Trek. He collected John Wayne movies and memorabilia.

He loved to fish and play laser tag in the middle of the night with his younger brother, Jason. He was unfailingly loyal, a good man to have on your team.

“He was someone I always looked up to,” said Jason Renault, 33. “He was about as much of a big brother as you can ask for. I kind of idolized him in way.”

After college, he joined the Largo Police Department, climbing to become a lieutenant. He was tough to crack, a man of deep voice and few words, said his wife, Jennifer Renault, a fellow Largo police officer. Some people were intimidated.

When they first met, “He paid no attention to me,” she said. “That was our big joke. But then he really helped me out, showing me what to do. He was just very genuine and always made me feel special.”

Lt. Renault received a medal of valor for climbing a fire ladder to get a suicidal man off the roof of a building, she said. Other times, he endured dog bites while trying to catch criminals.

He was an ace at poker, golfing, hunting, playing softball and fantasy football.

He hated to lose.

“Oh, yeah, he was a sore loser,” said his wife. “Mike Renault was a sore loser. Everyone will tell you that.”

Underneath, there was a soft man who wanted a huge family. He played and caught bugs with his sons, Hunter and Luke. He took them to ball games but curtailed his competitive side so they’d know it was fine to lose.

He yearned for a little girl. “He wanted the princess,” his wife said. “He wanted to be the dad to walk her down the aisle.”

Eleven months ago, Hannah Renault was born. Lt. Renault sat and listened to a country song called I Loved Her First. He teared picturing his daughter in a white dress. But three months later, he got staggering news—he had stomach cancer. His family and friends rallied. His fellow officers raised money and shaved their heads in solidarity.

As he ailed, he prayed and wrote in journals. He wanted his children to graduate, to get married, to travel. He wished they’d have fearless adventures and find their callings.

Lt. Renault died Tuesday. He was 37.

Biography

Michael Renault

Born: Oct. 1, 1971.

Died: Feb. 24, 2009.

Survivors: wife, Jennifer, children, Hunter, Luke and Hannah; parents, James and Judy Renault; siblings, Jason Renault, Kristen

Pitchford; grandmother, Betty Lynch; seven nieces and nephews.

Services: 2 p.m. Saturday at St. Paul United Methodist Church, 1199 Highland Ave., Largo.

EARMARK DISCLOSURE CORRECTION

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I would like to correct an error made in my description of a law enforcement request for the City of Lansing that should read “\$500,000” rather than “\$3,125,000.” This project was funded at \$500,000 by H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. RON KLEIN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 14, supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week. More than 400,000 Americans live with multiple sclerosis. This disease knows no gender, age, or ethnic boundaries. It strikes all in our society, even our children, with an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 who live with this terrible disease, by attacking the central nervous system. Symptoms, progress, and severity of the disease vary widely from patient to patient. Some can lead normal lives with symptoms like numbness in the limbs while others can be stricken with paralysis or blindness.

Mr. Speaker, I think everyone here can say that they know someone with MS. My wife and I know a number of people in our community in South Florida that are currently affected.

Despite the prevalence of this terrible disease, we are still a long way off before a cure is found. We still don’t know what causes MS and have no definitive way to diagnose it. Physicians are forced to use a combination of diagnostic strategies, which includes ruling out all other possible diagnoses. The result is that patients can go months, if not years, without a definitive understanding of what’s causing their debilitating symptoms.

Mr. Speaker, we must find a cure. As we have seen with other diseases where we have made major advances in treatment, progress starts with awareness in all levels of society and government. That’s why the concurrent resolution that we are considering today is so important. Not only does it recognize the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, but it reaffirms our national commitment to finding a cure.

I am proud to support this resolution. I thank my colleague from California, Ms. LEE, along with Mr. CARNAHAN and Dr. BURGESS, for introducing this resolution, and urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on final passage.

NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution raising awareness about the criminal justice system and crime awareness month. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

I find it tragic that approximately three million Americans are employed within the justice system. Approximately seven million adults are on probation, parole, or are incarcerated. Many more millions of Americans have been victims of crime and, consequently, lost income, incurred medical expenses, and suffered emotionally.

To be sure there is a high cost of crime to individuals, communities, businesses, and the various levels of government exceeds the billions of dollars spent each year in administering the criminal justice system. It is because of this that I have authored innovative legislation aimed at addressing these problems. For example, in the 110th Congress and again in the 111th Congress, I sponsored the Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2009 which addresses the disparity between crack and powder cocaine. The bill is presently numbered H.R. 265.

I also authored H.R. 61, Federal Prison Bureau Nonviolent Offender Relief Act of 2009. Importantly, this bill amends the federal criminal code to direct the Bureau of Prisons to release prisoners who (1) served one half or more of his or her term of imprisonment, (2) obtained at least the age of 45; (3) has never been convicted of a crime of violence; and (4) has not engaged in any violation of institutional disciplinary regulations.

These two pieces of legislation will go far in addressing the problems in the criminal justice system and will go far in educating the masses of Americans about the criminal justice system. Federal, State, and local governments increased their spending for police protection, corrections, judicial, and legal activities in fiscal year 2005 by 5.5 percent or \$204 billion. My bills if passed will decrease the amount of money spent on protecting communities and the warehousing of prisoners in the industrial prison complex.

More work needs to be done by Members of Congress. In 2006, fifty percent of Americans admitted they fear that their home would be burglarized when they are not home. Thirty-four percent of American women feared that they would be sexually assaulted and forty-four percent of Americans feared they would be a victim of a terrorist attack.

What is astonishing is that approximately thirty-five percent of Americans have very little or no confidence in the criminal justice system and the negative effects of crime in regard to confidence in governmental agencies and overall social stability are immeasurable.

The reality is that crime rates have dropped since the early 1990s, but most Americans believe that the rate of crime is increasing. Let me share some alarming statistics regarding crime in Houston.

CRIME STATISTICS IN HOUSTON

According to Houston Police Department statistics:

VIOLENT CRIMES

Violent crimes in Houston increased less than 1 percent in 2008 compared with 2007.

Homicides dropped by 16 percent.

The number of homicides dropped from 353 in 2007 to 295 last year.

Sexual assaults increased more than 8 percent from 2007.

Aggravated assaults increased at 9.1 percent.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Of the 1,092 additional aggravated assault cases in 2008, more than half were reports of domestic violence.

NONVIOLENT CRIMES

Nonviolent crimes declined more than 10 percent in 2008.

Property dropped by more than 10 percent.

Auto thefts decreased last year, dropping more than 21 percent to 15,214, down from 19,465 in 2007.

The bills that I authored are intended to make America a better, fairer place, and are intended to assist families and the incarcerated. They are smart bills that are aimed at making America a safer place and are aimed at lessening the expense of warehousing prisoners and the indiscriminate locking up of prisoners. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and the bills that I sponsored.

**EXTENDING CERTAIN
IMMIGRATION PROGRAMS**

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, the House's consideration of H.R. 1127, legislation to extend certain visas for religious workers and doctors serving in underserved areas highlights our broken immigration and visa system.

While R-1 visas and the Conrad 30 J waivers are noble programs there are many small businesses in my congressional district that face critical shortages of workers because Congress has failed to address the H-2B temporary worker visa program.

Without prompt action by Congress to extend H-2B visa cap relief, employers who rely on temporary and seasonal employees face severe worker shortages and the looming possibility of business closures in 2009.

Workers with H-2B visas provide necessary labor for the seafood, tourism, hospitality, and landscape industries, as well as many other temporary and non-agricultural jobs in this country. Due to the seasonal nature of the work and the structure of the cap, employers often face uncertainty and employment shortages during their busiest season.

I urge you to take action to quickly pass the Save Our Small and Seasonal Business Act of 2009. H.R. 1136 would address this important issue impacting many businesses in my district and across the country. Your leadership in this matter is critical in assuring that small and seasonal business will be able to successfully navigate the challenging times facing our economy.

**HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009**

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 1106, the "Helping Families Save Their Homes Act of 2009." We are in the midst of the gravest recession in recent memory and hear daily of countless foreclosures across the Nation, particularly in my home state of Michigan. As President Obama mentioned during his address to the Congress last week, the federal government can and must pursue measures to mitigate the effects of this terrible economic blight upon the Nation's citizens.

With the painful memories of the Great Depression still clearly in mind, I offer my wholehearted praise and support for the President's call to action. Additionally, as the representative of a congressional district with one of the Nation's highest foreclosure rates and most dramatic decline in housing values, I feel it imperative that we move swiftly to stabilize the housing market to keep people in their homes.

H.R. 1106's provisions will do much toward achieving this goal. Its improvements to the Hope for Homeowners program and provision for a safe harbor to mortgage servicers that elect to participate in mortgage modifications will help stem the tide of foreclosures sweeping across the country. The bill's provision to make permanent the increase in federal deposit insurance from \$100,000 to \$250,000 will give Americans greater faith in the safety of their savings at a time of continued bank failures.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to my colleagues, Representatives LOFGREN, TAUSCHER, and CARDOZA, for their work to narrow the authority in this bill afforded to bankruptcy judges to modify the terms of a loan for primary residences. I believe that in keeping with the President's housing plan, we should adopt a targeted effort at stemming foreclosures to address the housing crisis.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I MUST SAVE MY CHILD**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD.

[From Parade, Feb. 15, 2009]

I MUST SAVE MY CHILD

(By Melissa Fay Greene)

WHEN SUSAN AXELROD tells the story of her daughter, she begins like most parents of children with epilepsy: The baby was adorable, healthy, perfect. Lauren arrived in June 1981, a treasured first-born. Susan Landau had married David Axelrod in 1979, and

they lived in Chicago, where Susan pursued an MBA at the University of Chicago and David worked as a political reporter for the Chicago Tribune. (He later would become chief strategist for Barack Obama's Presidential campaign and now is a senior White House adviser.) They were busy and happy. Susan attended classes while her mother babysat. Then, when Lauren was 7 months old, their lives changed overnight.

"She had a cold," Susan tells me as we huddle in the warmth of a coffee shop in Washington, D.C., on a day of sleet and rain. Susan is 55, fine-boned, lovely, and fit. She has light-blue eyes, a runner's tan, and a casual fall of silver and ash-blond hair. When her voice trembles or tears threaten, she lifts her chin and pushes on.

"The baby was so congested, it was impossible for her to sleep. Our pediatrician said to give her one-quarter of an adult dose of a cold medication, and it knocked her out immediately. I didn't hear from Lauren the rest of the night. In the morning, I found her gray and limp in her crib. I thought she was dead.

"In shock, I picked her up, and she went into a seizure—arms extended, eyes rolling back in her head. I realized she'd most likely been having seizures all night long. I phoned my mother and cried, 'This is normal, right? Babies do this?' She said, 'No, they don't'."

The Axelrods raced Lauren to the hospital. They stayed for a month, entering a parallel universe of sleeplessness and despair under fluorescent lights. No medicine relieved the baby. She interacted with her parents one moment, bright-eyed and friendly, only to be grabbed away from them the next, shaken by inner storms, starting and stiffening, hands clenched and eyes rolling. Unable to stop Lauren's seizures, doctors sent the family home.

The Axelrods didn't know anything about epilepsy. They didn't know that seizures were the body's manifestation of abnormal electrical activity in the brain or that the excessive neuronal activity could cause brain damage. They didn't know that two-thirds of those diagnosed with epilepsy had seizures defined as "idiopathic," of unexplained origin, as would be the case with Lauren. They didn't know that a person could, on rare occasions, die from a seizure. They didn't know that, for about half of sufferers, no drugs could halt the seizures or that, if they did, the side effects were often brutal. This mysterious disorder attacked 50 million people worldwide yet attracted little public attention or research funding. No one spoke to the Axelrods of the remotest chance of a cure.

AT HOME, LIFE SHAKILY returned to a new normal, interrupted by Lauren's convulsions and hospitalizations. Exhausted, Susan fought on toward her MBA; David became a political consultant. Money was tight and medical bills stacked up, but the Axelrods had hope. Wouldn't the doctors find the right drugs or procedures? "We thought maybe it was a passing thing," David says. "We didn't realize that this would define her whole life, that she would have thousands of these afterward, that they would eat away at her brain."

"I had a class one night, I was late, there was an important test," Susan recalls. "I'd been sitting by Lauren at the hospital. When she fell asleep, I left to run to class. I got as far as the double doors into the parking lot when it hit me: 'What are you doing?'" She returned to her baby's bedside. From then on, though she would continue to build her family (the Axelrods also have two sons) and support her husband's career, Susan's chief role in life would be to keep Lauren alive and functioning.

THE LITTLE GIRL WAS AT RISK OF falling, of drowning in the bathtub, of dying of

a seizure. Despite dozens of drug trials, special diets, and experimental therapies, Lauren suffered as many as 25 seizures a day. In between them, she would cry, "Mommy, make it stop!"

While some of Lauren's cognitive skills were nearly on target, she lagged in abstract thinking and interpersonal skills. Her childhood was nearly friendless. The drugs Lauren took made her by turns hyperactive, listless, irritable, dazed, even physically aggressive. "We hardly knew who she was," Susan says. When she acted out in public, the family felt the judgment of onlookers. "Sometimes," Susan says, "I wished I could put a sign on her back that said: 'Epilepsy. Heavily Medicated'"

At 17, Lauren underwent what her mother describes as "a horrific surgical procedure." Holes were drilled in her skull, electrodes implanted, and seizures provoked in an attempt to isolate their location in the brain. It was a failure. "We brought home a 17-year-old girl who had been shaved and scalped, drilled, put on steroids, and given two black eyes," Susan says quietly. "We put her through hell without result. I wept for 24 hours."

The failure of surgery proved another turning point for Susan. "Finally, I thought, 'Well, I can cry forever, or I can try to make a change.'"

Susan began to meet other parents living through similar hells. They agreed that no federal agency or private foundation was acting with the sense of urgency they felt, leaving 3 million American families to suffer in near-silence. In 1998, Susan and a few other mothers founded a nonprofit organization to increase public awareness of the realities of epilepsy and to raise money for research. They named it after the one thing no one offered them: CURE—Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy.

"Epilepsy is not benign and far too often is not treatable," Susan says. "We wanted the public to be aware of the death and destruction. We wanted the brightest minds to engage with the search for a cure."

Then-First Lady Hillary Clinton signed on to help; so did other politicians and celebrities. Later, veterans back from Iraq with seizures caused by traumatic brain injuries demanded answers, too. In its first decade, CURE raised \$9 million, funded about 75 research projects, and inspired a change in the scientific dialogue about epilepsy.

"CURE evolved from a small group of concerned parents into a major force in our research and clinical communities," says Dr. Frances E. Jensen, a professor of neurology at Harvard Medical School. "It becomes more and more evident that it won't be just the doctors, researchers, and scientists pushing the field forward. There's an active role for parents and patients. They tell us when the drugs aren't working."

The future holds promise for unlocking the mysteries of what some experts now call Epilepsy Spectrum Disorder. "Basic neuroscience, electrophysiological studies, gene studies, and new brain-imaging technologies are generating a huge body of knowledge," Dr. Jensen says.

Lauren Axelrod, now 27, is cute and petite, with short black hair and her mother's pale eyes. She speaks slowly, with evident impairment but a strong Chicago accent. "Things would be better for me if I wouldn't have seizures," she says. "They make me have problems with reading and math. They make me hard with everything."

By 2000, the savagery and relentlessness of Lauren's seizures seemed unstoppable. "I thought we were about to lose her," Susan says. "Her doctor said, 'I don't know what else we can do.'" Then, through CURE, Susan learned of a new anti-convulsant drug

called Keppra and obtained a sample. "The first day we started her on the medication," Susan says, "her seizures subsided. It's been almost nine years, and she hasn't had a seizure since. It won't work for everyone, but it has been a magic bullet for Lauren. She is blooming."

Susan and David see their daughter regaining some lost ground: social intuition, emotional responses, humor. "It's like little areas of her brain are waking up," Susan says. "She never has a harsh word for anyone, though she did think the Presidential campaign went on a little too long. The Thanksgiving before last, she asked David, 'When is this running-for-President thing going to be finished?'"

CURE is run by parents. Susan has worked for more than a decade without pay, pushing back at the monster robbing Lauren of a normal life. "Nothing can match the anguish of the mom of a chronically ill child," David says, "but Susan turned that anguish into action. She's devoted her life to saving other kids and families from the pain Lauren and our family have known. What she's done is amazing."

"Complete seizure freedom without side effects is what we want," Susan says. "It's too late for us, so we've committed ourselves to the hope that we can protect future generations from having their lives defined and devastated by this disorder."

TRIBUTE TO DR. MONA BETHEL JACKSON

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Dr. Mona Bethel Jackson on the occasion of her retirement from the Miami-Dade County Public School System (MDCPS) with nearly 39 years of service and dedication.

Dr. Jackson, a native Miamian, was born to Charles Edward Bethel and Olga Goodman Bethel Williams. After graduating from George Washington Carver High School, she furthered her education at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University. She then obtained her master's degree in guidance and counseling from Florida Atlantic University and her doctorate in educational administration and supervision from Florida International University. She also attended Principal Institutes at Fordham University and Harvard University, and was the first African-American woman to serve as president of the Florida Counseling Association.

She began her professional career as a science teacher at Charles R. Drew Junior High School. She served as principal of Richmond Heights Middle School for the past 11 years and is currently serving as mentor principal at Miami Edison Senior High School. Moreover, she is also the first African-American to serve as principal of Redland Middle School. She previously served as lead principal of Miami Southridge Senior High School feeder pattern. In 1999, Richmond Heights Middle School was named a semifinalist for the National Alliance of Black School Educators Award. The school earned a grade of B in 2006 and A in 2008 on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). It is quite clear that Dr. Jackson has been successful at meeting the challenge of educating the needs of her community's young people.

Additionally, Dr. Jackson complimented her educational achievements with her involvement in various organizations such as Delta Sigma Theta Sorority's National, Collegiate and Alumnae Chapters; Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated; Haitian Refugee Center Board of Directors; Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Incorporated, Dade County Chapter; National Council of Jewish Women's Teen Violence Intervention Program Board and life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; National Council of Negro Women; and Red Hat Society. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and organizing activities.

This public servant is married to Herman Jackson, and has two children, Keane Sean (Kelsey) and Herman, II (Cassie), and five grandchildren. She has been a diligent and dedicated member at Christ Episcopal Church where she currently serves as a teller and president of the Episcopal Church Women.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to have the privilege of honoring Dr. Jackson, a valued educator of the Miami-Dade County community and beyond. She can look back on a proud career of service and distinction in education and community leadership. Now, in retirement, she embarks upon new challenges in life and I am certain her legacy of greatness will only grow and develop as she enters this new phase of life. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Dr. Mona Bethel Jackson every happiness and many years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING MISSOURI ADJUTANT GENERAL KING SIDWELL

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, let me take this moment to recognize the career of Missouri Adjutant General King E. Sidwell. General Sidwell retired in late February after serving four years as Adjutant General of the Missouri National Guard.

General Sidwell was born in Sikeston, Missouri, on July 13, 1950. He resides with his wife Cindy Sidwell in Sikeston. They have two sons, William Mitchell Sidwell II and Trent Easterby Sidwell.

In 1972, General Sidwell earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology. In 1975, he received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia and, in 2000, he received a Military and Strategic Studies degree from the United States Army War College.

General Sidwell has served in the military since 1972. He was commissioned as an officer in 1974 through the State Officer Candidate School at the Missouri Military Academy. Prior to his serving as Adjutant General, Sidwell served in many assignments of increasing responsibility, culminating with his command of the Engineer Brigade, 35th Infantry Division. Upon completion of this command, he assumed the position of Assistant Corps Engineer, 35th Engineer Brigade until being transferred to the Retired Reserve. It was from the Retired Reserve that Sidwell was appointed to the position of Adjutant General.

Under General Sidwell's leadership as Adjutant General, the Missouri National Guard developed the concept of and deployed an Agribusiness Development Team to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. This important agricultural redevelopment plan, which builds upon the knowledge and expertise of Missourians familiar with agriculture, is now being replicated by other states. The Missouri National Guard also equipped and deployed the first Maneuver Enhancement Brigade structure to command Multi-national Task Force East Kosovo.

General Sidwell has received numerous military awards. He has also been recognized as the Mid-Missouri Communicator of the Year by the Public Relations Society of America and as an outstanding leader by the Jefferson Barracks. The General is also affiliated with the National Guard Association, the American Bar Association, the Defense Research Institute, and the Sikeston Area United Way Board of Directors.

As General Sidwell retires from his current post, I trust that the Members of the House will join me in thanking him for his exceptional commitment to the Missouri National Guard and the safety and security of America.

HONORING MARK LUTTRELL

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Shelby County, Tennessee's Sheriff Mark Luttrell for being named the 2009 Sheriff of the Year presented by the National Sheriffs' Association.

First elected in 2002, Mark Luttrell has served Shelby County residents with strong leadership by placing the public's confidence back in the county's jail operations. Sheriff Luttrell has secured accreditation for both men's and women's jails, the medical unit, and the law enforcement division as well as many countless other achievements for which he is being recognized.

Luttrell continues to be an integral member in local and state efforts to fight street crime, including the successful Operation Safe Community. Sheriff Luttrell also serves on the Memphis/Shelby Crime Commission and Memphis Second Chance, an organization which aids first time offenders to transition back into society.

Sheriff Luttrell has set a high example of service, leadership, caring, and civic participation that all would do well to follow. Madam Speaker, I congratulate Sheriff Mark Luttrell on this well-deserved award, and ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating his accomplishments. We congratulate Sheriff Luttrell and his family on this wonderful occasion.

TRIBUTE ON THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DANVILLE, ILLINOIS

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 180th anniversary of the First Presbyterian Church of Danville, Illinois.

Built on land so graciously dedicated by Reverend Enoch Kingsbury, the First Presbyterian Church was founded on March 7, 1829 by eight charter members. The Church provided the first school and library of Danville.

From its humble beginnings in the 1830s, the church took a stand against slavery. Confirming their stance on slavery, the church would be honored with a visit from Abraham Lincoln, where he worshiped when his duties as attorney brought him to Danville.

The First Presbyterian Church continues to have a positive impact on the community by establishing and supporting several programs including Aunt Martha's Youth service, a free clinic, Faith in action, a program for adults 60 years of age and older, and Big Brothers Big Sisters, a mentoring service for youth. The church is a strong supporter of the arts through the use of the Aeolian-Skinner Pipe organ and the use of their facilities for musical performances.

I hope all of you will join me in recognizing The First Presbyterian Church in its faithful mission to be servants of Christ, both in their church and their community.

TRIBUTE TO RIVERSIDE FIRE CHIEF TEDD LAYCOCK

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Riverside, California are exceptional. Riverside has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Tedd Laycock is one of these individuals. On March 7, 2009, a dinner in honor of Chief Laycock will be held to celebrate his retirement from the City of Riverside Fire Department.

A lifelong resident of Riverside, Chief Laycock graduated from Ramona High School. After receiving his Associate of Science Degree in fire technology from Riverside City College, he went on to graduate from the University of Redlands with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

In 1973, Chief Laycock began his career with the City of Riverside Fire Department as a firefighter. He was subsequently promoted to Engineer in 1980; to Captain in 1984; to Battalion Chief in 2002; and to Fire Chief on April 8, 2005. Chief Laycock's natural leadership ability has contributed to his excellence as a

Fire Chief and established him as a pillar in the community. Chief Laycock retires after forty-six years of service to spend time with his grandchildren, two daughters, three sons, and his wife of ten years Cindy.

As a member of the Riverside community, Chief Laycock not only lived and worked there, but served those in his neighborhood. Chief Laycock has been a member of many local organizations such as the Uptown Kiwanis, the Latino Network and the Greater Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Twice, in 1994 and 1996, Chief Laycock was awarded the honor of the Exchange Club's Firefighter of the Year Award.

Chief Laycock's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Riverside, California. I am proud to call Tedd a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he retires.

TRIBUTE TO ELIJAH "PAT" LARKINS

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the late Elijah "Pat" Larkins, a dedicated public servant, tireless community activist and the city of Pompano Beach, Florida's first African-American mayor, who recently succumbed to a 16-month struggle with brain cancer.

Born a farmer's son in Pompano on April 29, 1942, Mr. Larkins, the eldest of nine siblings, graduated from what is now Blanche Ely High School. While a student at Ely High School, he led a boycott of classes when a Senior Day gathering of the county's three black high schools was cancelled. Following his attendance at Tennessee State University, Mr. Larkins was named a Ford Foundation fellow, which allowed him to attend the 1970 National Housing Institute.

In 1972, Mr. Larkins became a federally certified housing-development specialist who created the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition. The Coalition's mission is to ensure black-owned companies participated in South Florida's construction boom, an economic expansion that defined the area for years to come. In addition to his involvement with the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition, Mr. Larkins was a director of his own not-for-profit company, Malar Construction Co. in Fort Lauderdale.

While serving as a City Commissioner for 19 years and Mayor of Pompano Beach for seven terms, Mr. Larkin helped diversify the fire department and police while also advocating on behalf of Pompano Beach's predominantly black northwest quadrant. Mr. Larkin was also instrumental in changing Hammondville Road to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. One of his proudest achievements was getting the E. Pat Larkins Community Center, a center that provides the setting for meetings, banquets and other social events, up and running.

As a parishioner at Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church for over 30 years, "His greatness was measured by his servitude," the

Reverend Robert Stanley declared. Reverend Stanley continued saying, "For him, the position of mayor wasn't a position of clout. It was a place to make change." Pompano Beach Mayor Lamar Fisher stated: "his involvement in the city is immeasurable." When asked his legacy, Mr. Larkins said, "I have always had a great affinity and love for this city. I hope when it's all over it's said that Pat gave it all he had."

Madam Speaker, I ask you and all the members of this esteemed legislative body to join me in recognizing the extraordinary life and accomplishments of Mr. Elijah Pat Larkins. I am honored to pay tribute to Mr. Larkin for his invaluable services and tireless dedication to the South Florida community.

CONGRATULATING MAYOR THOMAS M. LEIGHTON, RECIPIENT OF THE 2009 "MAN OF THE YEAR" AWARD FROM THE WILKES-BARRE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Wilkes-Barre Mayor Thomas M. Leighton, recipient of the 2009 "Man of the Year" award from the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

Mayor Leighton began his tenure as the Mayor of the City of Wilkes-Barre on January 5, 2004. Prior to becoming mayor, he served three four-year terms as a city councilman, as Chairman in 1995, 1998 and 2002 and as Vice Chairman in 1994, 1997, 1999 and 2001.

A graduate of Bishop Hoban High School, Mayor Leighton earned a bachelor of science degree from King's College in Business Administration. In 1996, he became president and owner of C.A. Leighton Company, Inc., a real estate, insurance and appraisal business located in downtown Wilkes-Barre since 1921. To fulfill his professional licensing, Mayor Leighton has successfully completed numerous continuing education programs over the years in the fields of real estate, appraisal and insurance and has retained membership in real estate professional organizations.

The combination of his municipal and business experience has provided him with the knowledge and familiarity to meet the financial and operational challenges he faces as Mayor.

An active alumnus of King's College, Mayor Leighton served as chairman of the 2006 King's College Alumni Phonathon Fund Drive as well as on the President's Council and the Century Club. He is a former coach of many community sports leagues including the Wilkes-Barre Family YMCA, St. Theresa's Little League, Skyhawks Youth Soccer, Rolling Mill Hill Basketball, St. Nicholas/St. Mary's Basketball and he is also a certified PIAA referee.

Mayor Leighton is also a member of the Knights of Columbus Council 302, third degree, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Elks Club, Saint Conrad's Club, North End Slovak Club and the Eagles Club.

Mayor Leighton and his wife, Patty, have three children: Kelly, Tom Jr. and Courtney.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mayor Leighton on the occasion of this auspicious event. Mayor Leighton's exemplary commitment to his family, his city and northeastern Pennsylvania is a clear reflection of his determination to play an active role in the improvement of the quality of life for everyone and, because of that, his selection as Man of the Year is a well deserved honor.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN J. HALL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. HALL of New York. Madam Speaker, due to a family emergency I was unavoidably absent from the House on March 4, 2009, and missed the following votes:

Rollcall vote No. 94, a motion by Mr. PASCARELL of New Jersey to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 201, a resolution recognizing Beverly Eckert's service to the Nation and particularly to the survivors and families of the September 11, 2001, attacks. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote No. 95, a motion by Mr. CARNEY of Pennsylvania to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 195, a resolution recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security on its sixth anniversary for their continuous efforts to keep the Nation safe. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote No. 96, a motion by Ms. LOFGREN of California to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 45, a resolution raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March as "National Criminal Justice Month." Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, March 3, 2009, and Wednesday, March 4, 2009, I was not present for recorded votes due to the death of a close personal friend. Please let the record show that had I been present, I would have voted the following way: roll No. 91—"yea," roll No. 92—"yea," roll No. 93—"yea," roll No. 94—"yea," roll No. 95—"yea," roll No. 96—"yea."

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL MS AND PARKINSON'S DISEASE REGISTRIES ACT

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, along with the co-chairs of the Congressional Caucuses on MS and Parkinson's disease, we are pleased to introduce the National MS and Parkinson's Disease Registries Act—which, for

the first time, establish national Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease registries at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Currently, a national coordinated system to collect and analyze data on MS or Parkinson's disease does not exist. Accurate incidence and prevalence information is critical to gain a better understanding of these diseases that are estimated to affect more than 1.4 million Americans. The current lack of core knowledge about who has MS and Parkinson's disease and why inhibits research, programs, treatment and services.

This legislation will remedy that by developing coordinated, separate national systems to collect and store existing MS and Parkinson's disease data on incidence and prevalence. These registries could help uncover and inform promising areas of MS and Parkinson's research such as genetic and environmental risk factors, and support the discovery of disease therapies, treatments, and one day a cure. The information collected through the registries will provide a foundation for evaluating and understanding many factors such as geographic clusters of diagnosis, variances in the gender ratio, disease burden, and changes in health care practices.

Madam Speaker, this legislation represents an opportunity to move neurological disease research in a meaningful way that aims to improve the lives of our constituents with Parkinson's and MS. I invite my colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this much-needed bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLEN BOYD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. BOYD. Madam Speaker, due to personal reasons, I was unable to attend to several votes. Had I been present, my vote would have been "yea" on H. Res. 201, Recognizing Beverly Eckert's service to the Nation and particularly to the survivors and families of the September 11, 2001 attacks; "yea" on H. Res. 195, Recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security on its sixth anniversary for their continuous efforts to keep the Nation safe; and "yea" on H. Res. 45, Raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March as "National Criminal Justice Month".

CONGRATULATING WALTER J. ZABLE AND THE CUBIC CORPORATION

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Cubic Corporation, a San Diego-based company celebrating 50 years as a publicly traded entity. In fact, on March 5, 2009, executives from Cubic were invited to the New York Stock Exchange to ring the opening bell to mark the occasion.

Since its founding in 1951 and subsequent status as a publicly traded company in 1959,

Walter J. Zable, Chairman and CEO, has been at the helm. I've known Walt for many years and this celebration not only marks a 50-year milestone for Cubic, but serves as a remarkable testament to the wisdom and good business sense of Mr. Zable.

While Cubic has experienced its share of business challenges, Mr. Zable has kept adhering to commonsense business tenets that steady the ship and allow Cubic steady, sustainable growth.

Cubic has followed a strong and responsible business philosophy, allowing it to achieve solid growth over many years along with the ability to weather several economic downturns—including the one the country currently faces.

While there are other companies that have had more spectacular growth than Cubic, many have suffered equally spectacular downturns as well. Cubic, under the leadership of Mr. Zable, has maintained a considered commonsense approach to its businesses thus returning stable, sustainable growth.

From its humble beginnings almost 60 years ago, Cubic is now an enterprise with \$881 million in 2008 sales and an employer of more than 7,000 people worldwide. The markets that it works in—Defense and Transportation—are much needed in this tumultuous world and Cubic holds a strong position in these markets. Today the company now operates in more than 45 countries with the largest foreign customer being the United Kingdom.

Indeed, in these difficult economic times, Cubic stands as a true American success story.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
JANIE GLYMPH GOREE

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a trailblazer whose passing us mourn by all South Carolinians. The Honorable Janie Glymph Goree was the first female African American to be elected mayor of a South Carolina town. She passed away on January 13, 2009, at the age of 87 and I ask that we take a moment to celebrate her exceptional life and legacy.

Janie Glymph Goree was born in 1921, the youngest of ten children born to sharecroppers Orlander and Chaney Glymph in the Maybinton community of Newberry County. Her parents valued education, but there were limited educational opportunities for black children growing up in the rural, segregated South. Yet one of her teachers recognized her potential and provided her with the education she desperately desired.

Mrs. Goree became the first in her family to attend college. She had been awarded a scholarship to attend South Carolina State College, but financial problems prevented her from going. Although temporarily delayed, she worked as a domestic and eventually earned enough to pay her way through Benedict College in Columbia. Her hard work and determination paid off and she graduated Magna Cum Laude as Valedictorian of the class of 1948. She went on to earn her Masters De-

gree in Basic Sciences and Mathematics from the University of Colorado in 1959, and did further study at Notre Dame and the University of Wisconsin.

For 33 years she taught math at Sims High School and Union High School, where she spent a great deal of time sponsoring extra-curricular programs for the students. Knowing the value of an education, she also tutored illiterate people and instructed Post Office workers. She always sought to improve her knowledge, and participated in numerous workshops and conferences.

Throughout her adult life, Mrs. Goree was active in politics. In 1978, she was elected Mayor of the Town of Carlisle, which made history in South Carolina. A sharecroppers' daughter, who once worked as a maid, was now the first black female to serve as Mayor of a South Carolina town. The same dogged-determination and dedication that led to success in the classroom also enabled Mrs. Goree to have great success as a municipal leader.

During her 22 years as Mayor of Carlisle, she won major grants to improve the city's water system, sewers, administration buildings, recreation areas, and build a fire department. She knew that basic infrastructure was essential to the quality of life for the residents in her community, and she made it her top priority. Always one to seek and share knowledge, Mrs. Goree was very active in organizations that allowed her to take fact-finding trips all over the world, visiting every continent except Antarctica.

She was an active participant in state and national organizations, including leadership positions in the South Carolina Conference of Black Mayors, the Municipal Association, the National Conference of Black Mayors, the Union County Chamber of Commerce and the World Conference of Mayors. She was invited to the White House several times, and interacted with Presidents and world leaders. For her civic work, Mrs. Goree received numerous awards and citations. One of her proudest honors was having the Carlisle Town Hall, which she helped to build, named in her honor.

Mrs. Goree was an active member of Seekwell Baptist Church, where she served as a volunteer, committee person, and Sunday school teacher. She was married to the late Charlie Goree, and is survived by six step-children, a foster son, and 32 nieces and nephews.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in celebrating the life of this extraordinary woman. Janie Glymph Goree turned life's challenges into a drive to succeed. This pioneer who changed her community was well-known nationally and internationally. Her lasting legacy can be seen on all the streets of Carlisle and in the countless people she helped educate over the years. Her presence will be sorely missed.

IN TRIBUTE TO CHRISTIE
STANLEY

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. GALLEGLY. Madam Speaker, I rise in tribute to my friend Christie Stanley, District

Attorney for the County of Santa Barbara, California.

Christie Stanley joined the District Attorney's Office in 1980 and quickly moved into supervisory positions, including 15 years as Assistant District Attorney for the North County, where she was responsible for the day-to-day operations of all the District Attorney's Office's business north of the Gaviota Pass.

The hundreds of cases she prosecuted include two Crips gang members who came from Los Angeles and ambushed a Lompoc police officer as he responded to their call for help. The shooter is serving a life sentence for attempted murder.

Many murder cases she prosecuted were domestic violence cases, a cause she deeply believes in. The cases include a triple murder in which the defendant is serving three consecutive life sentences, two without the possibility of parole.

Christie Stanley's outstanding career led to her election as District Attorney in June 2006. With a nearly perfect conviction rate, Santa Barbara voters gave her an overwhelming vote of confidence with 70 percent of the vote.

She has not let them down.

As District Attorney, Mrs. Stanley supervises 52 prosecuting attorneys, 24 investigators, and victims advocates and support staff with offices in Santa Barbara, Santa Maria and Lompoc. She has earned their loyalty. They share her vision of upholding the law with a combination of fairness and firmness.

District Attorney Stanley traces her career as a prosecuting attorney to a favorite uncle who was murdered in a small town in Kansas. Her uncle's killer was caught and brought through the town square where the townspeople were bent on vengeance. In Christie's words:

"The officers who had him in custody, friends and colleagues of my uncle, brought the killer in safely so he could be prosecuted. I was and am consistently impressed by law enforcement professionals who do the right thing, even when it is the hard thing to do."

That attitude has earned District Attorney Stanley the respect and cooperation of law enforcement officers at every level, the respect and gratitude of crime victims, and animosity from criminals of every stripe.

Madam Speaker, tomorrow California State Senator Tony Strickland will honor Christie Stanley as the 19th Senate District Woman of the Year. It is a well deserved honor for a tough and respected prosecutor. I know my colleagues will join me in congratulating District Attorney Christie Stanley and in thanking her for dedicated and unflagging service to the people of Santa Barbara County.

EXTENDING CERTAIN
IMMIGRATION PROGRAMS

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this bill reauthorizing two very important programs, the Non-Minister Religious Worker Program and the Program for Doctors Serving in Underserved Areas Program. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill that reauthorizes these much needed and much utilized programs.

"The Special Immigrant Non-Minister Religious Worker Visa Program." The participants under this program have come under closer scrutiny as investigations have determined that the participants were engaging in fraud. The religious worker visa program allows U.S. religious denominations to fill critical religious worker positions for which there are no qualified candidates in the U.S. with qualified religious workers abroad. The program provides for two types of visas. The one is a special immigrant visa, which allows qualified religious workers to immigrate to the U.S. permanently and later become citizens if they so choose and meet the qualification. The other is the non-immigrant visa, which allows qualified religious workers to enter temporarily and perform services in the U.S. for a proscribed period. Both of these visas may be granted to both ministers and non-minister religious workers.

This bill extends the program but does not provide for it to be in place permanently. I think that this bill is much needed and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The second program extended under this bill is the special program for doctors serving underserved communities. The Immigration and Nationality Act allows for foreign doctors to train in the United States under the "J-1" visa program, otherwise known as non-immigrants in the "Exchange Visitor Program." This Exchange Visitor Program seeks to promote peaceful relations and mutual understanding with other countries through educational and cultural exchange programs. Accordingly, many exchange visitors, including doctors in training, are subject to a requirement that they must return to their home country to share with their countrymen the knowledge, experience, and impressions gained during their stay in the United States. Unless USCIS approves a waiver of this requirement in those cases, the exchange visitors must depart from the United States and live in their home country for two years before they are allowed to apply for an immigrant visa, permanent residence, or a new nonimmigrant status.

A waiver of the two year foreign residency requirement is available for doctors who have trained in the United States under the J-1 visa if a state or an interested federal agency sponsors the physician exchange visitor to work in a health manpower shortage area within the state for 3 years as a non-immigrant in H-1B status (temporary worker in specialty occupation). The Secretary of Health and Human Services determines which areas have a health manpower shortage.

This bill would extend this waiver to ensure that areas in the United States with a shortage of doctors have an option to hire a doctor with a J-1 visa for three years where there is no other doctor available to fill the job.

As the immigrant doctors are getting a benefit so too should underserved Americans. In the underlying bill, I am pleased that my language was included. Specifically my language ensured that the underserved would indeed be served. My language provided:

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) Federal programs waiving the 2-year foreign residence requirement under section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(e)) for physicians are generally designed to promote the delivery of critically needed medical services to people

in the United States lacking adequate access to physician care; and

(2) when determining the qualification of a location for designation as a health professional shortage area, the Secretary of Health and Human Services should consider the needs of vulnerable populations in low-income and impoverished communities, communities with high infant mortality rates, and communities exhibiting other signs of a lack of necessary physician services.

This language was included in the bill. I will continue to work with Congresswoman LOFGREN and the Immigration Subcommittee to ensure that this happens.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CAMPBELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. CAMPBELL. Madam Speaker, from February 3, 2009, to March 4, 2009, I missed Roll Call votes 47–96. Unfortunately, I underwent a surgical procedure and was in California recuperating. Had I been here, I would have voted the following:

Roll Call Vote 47: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 82, raising awareness and encouraging prevention of stalking by establishing January 2009 as National Stalking Awareness Month;

Roll Call Vote 48: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 103, supporting the goals and ideals of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week;

Roll Call Vote 49: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H.R. 559, The Fair, Accurate, Secure, and Timely (FAST) Redress Act of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 50: No on the motion to concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 2, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 51: Yes on the motion to commit with instructions S. 352, the DTV Delay Act;

Roll Call Vote 52: No on passage of S. 352, the DTV Delay Act;

Roll Call Vote 53: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 738, the Death in Custody Reporting Act;

Roll Call Vote 54: Yes on the motion to instruct conferees on H. R. 1, Making Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal Year Ending 2009;

Roll Call Vote 55: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 114, Supporting the Goals and Ideals of National Girls and Women in Sports Day;

Roll Call Vote 56: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 60, Recognizing and commending University of Oklahoma quarterback Sam Bradford for winning the 2008 Heisman Trophy and for his academic and athletic accomplishments;

Roll Call Vote 57: No on the motion to table H. Res. 143, Raising a Question of the Privileges of the House;

Roll Call Vote 58: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 128, Honoring Miami University for its 200 years of commitment to extraordinary higher education;

Roll Call Vote 59: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 134, Rec-

ognizing the 50th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s visit to India and the positive influence that the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi had on Dr. King's work during the Civil Rights Movement;

Roll Call Vote 60: No on agreeing to H. Con. Res. 47, Providing for an adjournment or recess of the two Houses;

Roll Call Vote 61: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 154, Honoring JOHN D. DINGELL for holding the record as the longest serving member of the House of Representatives;

Roll Call Vote 62: No on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 448, the Elder Abuse Victims Act;

Roll Call Vote 63: No on the motion to agree to H. Res. 157, providing for the consideration of motions to suspend the rules, and for other purposes;

Roll Call Vote 64: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 117, Supporting the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week;

Roll Call Vote 65: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Con. Res. 35, Honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 100th anniversary;

Roll Call Vote 66: No on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 168, providing for consideration of the conference report to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 67: No on H. Res. 168, providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 68: No on the question of consideration of the conference report to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 69: Yes on the motion to recommit the conference report to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 70: No on agreeing to the conference report to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 71: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules agree to H. Res. 139, Commemorating the life and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln on the bicentennial of his birth;

Roll Call Vote 72: No on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 911, the Stop Child Abuse in Residential Programs for Teens Act;

Roll Call Vote 73: No on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 44, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act;

Roll Call Vote 74: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 601, the Box Elder Utah Land Conveyance Act;

Roll Call Vote 75: No on approving the journal;

Roll Call Vote 76: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and H.R. 80, the Captive Prisoner Safety Act;

Roll Call Vote 77: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 637, the South Orange County Recycled Water Enhancement Act;

Roll Call Vote 78: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 83, Recognizing the significance of Black History Month;

Roll Call Vote 79: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 234, the Colonel John H. Wilson, Jr. Post Office Building;

Roll Call Vote 80: Yes on approving the journal;

Roll Call Vote 81: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 47, Supporting the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day;

Roll Call Vote 82: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 180, Supporting the goals and ideals of the third annual America Saves Week;

Roll Call Vote 83: No on the consideration of H. Res. 184, providing for consideration of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations for 2009;

Roll Call Vote 84: Yes on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 184, providing for consideration of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations for 2009;

Roll Call Vote 85: Yes on H. Res. 184, providing for the consideration of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 86: No on passage of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations of 2009;

Roll Call Vote 87: No on the motion to table H. Res. 189, raising a question of the privileges of the House;

Roll Call Vote 88: No on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 190, providing for consideration of H.R. 1106 to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability;

Roll Call Vote 89: No on H. Res. 190, Providing for consideration of H.R. 1106 to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability;

Roll Call Vote 90: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 183, expressing condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of the victims of the crash of Continental Connection flight 3407;

Roll Call Vote 91: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 146, the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Battlefield Protection Act;

Roll Call Vote 92: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 548, the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act;

Roll Call Vote 93: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 77, congratulating the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, VA for more than 100 years of service and leadership to the United States;

Roll Call Vote 94: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 201, recognizing Beverly Eckerts service to the nation and particularly to the survivors and families of the September 11, 2001, attacks.

Roll Call Vote 95: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 195, recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security on its sixth anniversary for their continuous efforts to keep the nation safe; and

Roll Call Vote 96: Yes on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 45, raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March as National Criminal Justice Month.

A TRIBUTE TO PAUL HARVEY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, poet and capitol tour guide Albert C.

Caswell has penned a number of heartfelt tributes, and recently, he wrote a poem about radio broadcaster and American legend Paul Harvey. Mr. Harvey passed away on February 28th after a life and career that spanned over nine decades. His voice and the kind and commonsense message it brought to us all will be cherished and sorely missed.

GOOD DAY . . .

(By Albert Carey Caswell)

Good day . . .
 Goodnight . . .
 Rest, you American Icon . . . to heaven take flight . . .
 The voice of The Heartland, a sheer delight . . .
 "Hello American's" . . . Paul, oh how we miss you this night . . .
 That voice . . .
 Your smile, and your style . . . burning bright!
 The stories, The glory, of tales told each night . . .
 Warming our hearts, playing their parts . . . reinforcing in our souls all that is right!
 An America Man, with his tales of the heart that which so stand . . . bringing his light . . .
 Behind the microphone, with him we were never alone . . .
 Like a best friend, as our hearts he did own . . .
 Telling his stories, of faith and hope and glory . . . bringing us home . . .
 As good as it gets!
 As his life was a championship . . . of what is so right . . .
 Married for 75 years, great American Values here . . .
 Oh how we miss him this night . . .
 And now "The Rest of the Story" . . .
 Surely, this Man's soul was bound for glory . . .
 As Heaven he's found . . .
 Good Day!

STATEMENT ON INTRODUCING THE SUNLIGHT RULE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously said, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant." In order to shine sunlight on the practices of the House of Representatives, and thus restore public trust and integrity to this institution, I am introducing the sunlight rule, which amends House rules to ensure that members have adequate time to study a bill before being asked to vote on it. One of the chief causes of increasing public cynicism regarding Congress is the way major pieces of legislation are brought to the floor without members having an opportunity to read the bills. For example, the over-one-thousand page economic stimulus bill was first posted on the Internet at 12:30 a.m. the night before the vote. Obviously, this did not give individual members of Congress adequate time to review what is certainly one of, if not the, most significant pieces of legislation that Congress will consider this year.

My proposed rule requires that no piece of legislation, including conference reports, can be brought before the House of Representatives unless it has been available to members and staff in both print and electronic version

for at least ten days. My bill also requires that a manager's amendment that makes substantive changes to a bill be available in both printed and electronic forms at least 72 hours before voted on. While manager's amendments are usually reserved for technical changes, oftentimes manager's amendments contain substantive additions to or subtractions from bills. Members should be made aware of such changes before being asked to vote on a bill.

The sunlight rule provides the people the opportunity to be involved in enforcing the rule by allowing a citizen to petition for an Office of Congressional Ethics investigation into any House Member who votes for a bill brought to the floor in violation of this act. The sunlight rule can never be waived by the Committee on Rules or House leadership. If an attempt is made to bring a bill to the floor in violation of this rule, any member could raise a point of order requiring the bill to be immediately pulled from the House calendar until it can be brought to the floor in a manner consistent with this rule.

Madam Speaker, the practice of rushing bills to the floor before individual members have had a chance to study the bills is one of the major factors contributing to public distrust of Congress. Voting on bills before members have had time to study them makes a mockery of representative government and cheats the voters who sent us here to make informed decisions on public policy. Adopting the sunlight rule is one of, if not the, most important changes to the House rules this Congress could make to restore public trust in, and help preserve the integrity of, this institution. I hope my colleagues will support this change to the House rules.

TRIBUTE TO UCR CHANCELLOR DR. TIMOTHY P. WHITE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and welcome a person whose passion for leadership and duty have distinguished him amongst his colleagues. I stand to recognize the Inauguration of the eighth Chancellor at the University of California, Riverside: Dr. Timothy P. White. The Inauguration ceremony will be held on March 17, 2009.

Chancellor White was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His family would later immigrate to the United States where he would come to call California his home. A first-generation college graduate, Chancellor White has certainly made his family, who deeply values education, proud.

Dr. White began his collegiate studies at Diablo Valley Community College, and later graduated Magna Cum Laude from the California State University of Fresno, where he received his Bachelor's Degree. He then pursued and obtained his Masters Degree from the California State University of Hayward. Later Dr. White added a doctorate in exercise physiology from the University of California, Berkeley to his resume.

Chancellor White's curriculum vitae includes a long list of work throughout the United States as an educator and scientist at the University of Michigan, Oregon State University,

University of California Berkeley, the University of Idaho, and now the University of California Riverside. Chancellor White is internationally recognized for his discussion of physiology in various published medical journals and editorials. With more than 30 years of service in higher education, Dr. White's experience is not only an impressive accolade, but a symbol of his passion and tireless commitment toward the sharing of knowledge and ideas. The University of California, Riverside will benefit greatly from Dr. White's impressive knowledge and skills, especially as it embarks on the establishment of a medical school.

Riverside is an area that calls for great leaders that are ready to achieve goals that will propel both the university and the community forward. Dr. White has proven he is a true leader and his experience and passion will greatly benefit UC Riverside, a proud part of the Riverside community and the state of California. Chancellor Timothy P. White represents a welcome addition to the University of California at Riverside and to the region it serves. On behalf of the Inland Empire delegation, I wholeheartedly welcome Dr. White as the eighth distinguished Chancellor of the University of California, Riverside and look forward to working with him for many years to come.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Chair, the mortgage foreclosure crisis is the center of the financial crisis that our country is now facing. And, until we take on the foreclosure crisis, and find a way to help keep people in their homes, we are never going to get to the root causes of our economic downturn.

That's why I support judicial modification of primary residences in bankruptcy proceedings. This important provision in H.R. 1106, the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act, would allow judges who are presiding over bankruptcies to modify the terms of a mortgage, allowing homeowners who are trying to keep their heads above water and stay in their homes. The more people who are facing foreclosure, the worse this crisis is going to get.

It's important that, as this bill makes its way through Congress, we work with our counterparts in the Senate to ensure this provision isn't used as a tool for those who would be tempted to commit fraud. It's equally important to ensure that those institutions who have acted in good faith are not unfairly punished by the good intentions of this bill. There are many lenders, like some of the credit unions in my district, who have not traded in the subprime market, and have bent over backwards to keep their members in their homes. It would be shameful if anything that we are doing with H.R. 1106 negatively impacted those who are actively trying to solve the foreclosure epidemic from the lending side of the ledger.

Mr. Chair, I hope that this is only the first of many bills that come to the House Floor to address the housing crisis, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY MEETINGS, THE OECD, THE OSCE, THE NATO SCHOOL, AND THE GEORGE C. MARSHALL EUROPEAN CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, from February 14–21, I led a bipartisan House delegation to NATO Parliamentary Assembly meetings in Brussels and with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, and to additional meetings at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna, Austria, and the NATO School and Marshall Center for Security Studies in Germany. The co-chair of my delegation was the Hon. JO ANN EMERSON. In addition, Representatives JOHN BOOZMAN, BARON HILL, CAROLYN MCCARTHY, CHARLIE MELANCON, JEFF MILLER (Brussels only), DENNIS MOORE, MIKE ROSS, and DAVID SCOTT, and staff, worked to make this a highly successful trip during which we examined current NATO issues, above all NATO's engagement in Afghanistan, the alliance's evolving relations with Russia, and the effect of the global economic downturn on NATO operations.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) consists of members of parliament from the 26 NATO states, as well as members of parliament from candidate states Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia (or Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, FYROM), and other associated states such as Russia, Georgia, and Ukraine. Last fall, I had the honor of being elected to serve a two-year term as President of the Assembly. In this capacity, I preside over meetings during which delegates discuss and debate a range of issues of importance to the alliance. Delegates have the opportunity to listen to presentations by specialists from NATO and on NATO affairs, and to engage in discussion of the issues raised. An additional element of the meetings is the opportunity to meet and come to know members of parliaments who play important foreign-policy roles in their own countries. These responsibilities can include setting defense budgets and determining the operational restrictions placed on deployed forces. Some of the acquaintances made through the NATO PA can last the duration of a career and are invaluable for gaining insight into developments in allied states.

NATO will celebrate its 60th anniversary at a summit in Strasbourg, France and Kehl, Germany on April 3–4, 2009. Discussion during the NATO PA's February meetings were dominated by four key issues expected to be addressed at the April summit: NATO's stabilization mission in Afghanistan; its evolving relations with Russia; plans to draft a new NATO Strategic Concept; and the effects of the global economic downturn on national security and allied commitments to NATO. Our

counterparts from NATO-member parliaments also expressed particular interest in the foreign policy goals of the 111th Congress and of the new U.S. Administration. As I will elaborate in a moment, my colleagues and I took the opportunity to respond to questions on these issues and to present our views on the current direction of U.S. foreign policy.

The key issue facing the alliance is NATO's effort to bring security and stability to Afghanistan. NATO has staked its reputation on accomplishing the Afghan mission by sending a sizeable force, extolling the alliance's capability for global reach, and expending resources to rebuild the political and economic structure of a country from which emanated the most devastating terrorist attack in western history. Failure in Afghanistan would likely call into question the future of the alliance. Approximately 55,100 troops from 39 countries currently serve in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), with NATO members providing the core of the force. The United States now contributes approximately 24,000 troops to ISAF. In February, President Obama announced that the United States will send an additional 17,000 troops to Afghanistan in the coming months. Forces from the United States, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, and the UK bear the brunt of the fighting. The inequity of burden-sharing in combat operations remains an important point of contention in the alliance, and is a factor in domestic opposition to the conflict apparent in states that contribute the most combat forces. Each of us on the delegation made an effort to urge our counterparts from NATO parliaments to support ISAF and to contribute the forces and resources necessary to stabilize Afghanistan. Our delegation also emphasized that success in Afghanistan will depend on more than just military efforts, and called on the alliance to develop a more comprehensive political strategy for the region that includes increased engagement in Pakistan.

Relations between NATO and Russia in 2008 reached their lowest point since the end of the Cold War. Russia vocally opposed U.S.-supported proposals to strengthen NATO ties with Georgia and Ukraine, and Moscow's opposition to a proposed U.S. missile defense installation in Poland and the Czech Republic has sparked contentious debate about the merits of the U.S. plans. Tensions between NATO and Russia escalated in the wake of Russia's August 2008 invasion of Georgia, after which the sides suspended formal ties in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). Low-level cooperation between NATO and Russia resumed in January, and formal ties in the NRC could resume after the April summit. NATO members remain divided on how to manage relations with Russia. Our delegation contributed to a number of forceful discussions on the future of NATO-Russia relations and emphasized the importance of developing a unified approach toward Russia within the framework of a broader alliance policy toward the east.

Proposals for a new NATO Strategic Concept were a third topic of discussion at NATO PA meetings. NATO's current Strategic Concept was drafted in 1999 and a growing number of allied governments have called for the

creation of a new Strategic Concept that clarifies and updates the scope of NATO's activities. Such a document could address a number of important issues facing the alliance, including a possible streamlining of NATO decision-making and commitment to more equitable cost-sharing of missions; a clearer commitment to the missions of counter terrorism and counter proliferation, and possibly energy and cyber security; and a rationale for future enlargement. The April Summit's Declaration on Alliance Security could serve as a foundation and impetus for a new Strategic Concept that would be approved in 2010.

While in Brussels, our delegation met first with Ambassador Kurt Volker, the U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO. He provided a briefing and responded to our questions on a wide range of issues including those I just outlined and NATO's ongoing peacekeeping operations in Kosovo. There followed three days of meetings of the NATO PA's Defense and Security, Political, and Economics and Security Committees. The meetings raised such issues as NATO's current political agenda, NATO's relations with the countries of Central Asia, NATO defense policy, and U.S. and European responses to the global financial crisis and economic downturn. At the request of our fellow NATO PA delegations, I presided over an open joint session of the NATO PA's Political, Defense and Security, and Economic and Security Committees during which members of the U.S. delegation presented views and answered questions on the foreign policy priorities of the 111th Congress and the Obama Administration. Representatives McCarthy and Ross each made forceful and provocative presentations during which they emphasized U.S. willingness to listen to its allies when determining the way forward in Afghanistan and in other key foreign policy areas. At the same time, they expressed their hope that allied countries would increase their commitments to NATO efforts across the globe. Representatives Emerson and McCarthy also gave comprehensive responses to numerous questions about the U.S. response to the current global economic downturn and the effect of the downturn on U.S. foreign policy. Many of our counterparts from allied nations expressed their hope that the new U.S. Administration would reaffirm its commitment to multilateralism and international diplomacy.

We also held meetings with officials at NATO headquarters in Brussels and at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. I had the opportunity to meet privately with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to discuss developments in Afghanistan and priorities for the upcoming April Summit. Half of the delegation then attended a meeting of the North Atlantic Council, the alliance's governing body, comprised of representatives from the 26 member states. A range of issues—Russia, energy security, developments in the Arctic, and piracy in the Gulf of Aden among them—was discussed. We ended the day at NATO headquarters by meeting with U.S. General Karl Eikenberry, who is a member of NATO's Military Committee, and a former commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan. He briefed the delegation on NATO's mission in Afghanistan and highlighted the need to create a secure environment for upcoming Afghan national elections, to boost the capacity of the Afghan National Army and Afghan security forces, and

to address the complexities of the political situation in Pakistan that is affecting Afghanistan's stability. The other half of the delegation visited SHAPE headquarters in Mons, where they received an insightful presentation on NATO military operations from NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General John Craddock. The group also toured NATO's Special Operations Forces Coordination Center.

The following day, our delegation attended a meeting of the NATO PA's Economics and Security Committee at the European Commission. At the Commission, we engaged in interesting and informative discussions on Europe's response to the financial crisis, the state of the transatlantic trade relationship, and European Union (EU) policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia. A highlight of the day was an exceptional presentation by the EU's Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Joaquin Almunia, who gave a lively presentation and concise overview of the consequences in Europe of the global financial crisis and of European proposals for an enhanced global response to the crisis. The delegation also met with the EU's Director General for Trade, David O'Sullivan, who outlined the principal points of controversy in transatlantic trade relations and the Doha round of trade talks.

The delegation then traveled to Paris for NATO PA meetings at the OECD. On the evening of our arrival in Paris, we held informative discussions with the Charge d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in France, Mark Pekala, and several of his staff. French foreign policy priorities and the prospects for French reintegration into NATO's military command structure were key topics of interest. The delegation welcomed the possibility of France's full reintegration into NATO, which could lead to an enhancement of France's already significant commitments to allied operations. The following day, after a brief session with our Charge d'Affaires to the OECD and his staff, we attended sessions at the OECD and met with the OECD's Secretary General, Angel Gurría. The state of the world economy, the global financial crisis, and the International Energy Agency's Global Energy Outlook were key subjects of discussion. The OECD is playing a crucial role in monitoring global economic trends and national and multilateral responses to the financial crisis at a time when global economic security and national security issues are becoming inextricably linked.

That evening, we traveled to Vienna, Austria, for a day of meetings with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and its Parliamentary Assembly. The 56-member OSCE is a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation in an area spanning from Vancouver, Canada to Vladivostok, Russia. As President of the NATO PA, I was invited to address the 320-member OSCE PA during its opening plenary session. Our delegation also held informative private meetings with the OSCE Chairwoman in Office, Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, and the U.S. Charge d'Affaires to the OSCE, Kyle Scott. Two of the key topics of discussion were Russia's calls for a new European security framework and the future of the OSCE's monitoring mission in Georgia. Russia hopes to convene a Euro-

pean security conference later this year to discuss proposals for a reform of the European security architecture that some view as an attempt to weaken support for NATO. Members of our delegation made clear that while we are willing to engage in dialogue with Russia on all issues, we would staunchly oppose any effort to counter or exclude NATO from the discussions. In my address to the OSCE PA, I called for robust dialogue and cooperation between NATO and OSCE member states to ensure that the current global economic downturn does not spark nationalist and protectionist measures that could become a source of conflict between societies. I also called on international organizations such as the European Union and United Nations to enhance and better coordinate their development initiatives in Afghanistan. The effort in Afghanistan is neither only a NATO effort nor solely a military effort.

The following morning, we traveled to Munich, Germany for site visits and meetings at the NATO School in Oberammergau and the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. I am proud to report that ours was the first U.S. Congressional Delegation to visit the NATO School in its 56-year history. The NATO School is a U.S.-German bilateral institution that serves as NATO's premier operational-level education and training center. NATO School Commandant, Colonel James J. Tabak U.S.-MC and Deputy Commandant Colonel (G.S.) Enrico Werner DEU-AF briefed the delegation on the school's wide range of training and education programs for officers and civilians from NATO member states and partner countries. We were particularly impressed with one of the school's flagship programs that prepares NATO members deploying to serve in NATO's Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan. By building operational capacity and fostering collaboration between allied countries, the school plays a crucial role in preparing the United States and its allies to face the evolving security challenges of the 21st century. The delegation would especially like to recognize and thank all NATO member and partner nations who enable the NATO School to continue its mission by sending top training personnel on fully-funded rotations to the school.

The final stop on our trip was the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The Marshall Center is a German-American partnership dedicated to creating a more stable security environment by advancing democratic institutions, promoting peaceful security cooperation, and enhancing partnerships among the nations of North America, Europe, and Eurasia. At the Center, we were welcomed by the Mayor of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Lord Thomas Schmid, and the Center's Director, Dr. John Rose. Dr. Rose briefed the delegation on the Marshall Center's wide range of programs and activities. These include courses for government officials on security and terrorism studies and in-depth research projects on a broad array of security and governance issues. We then had a lively discussion with the Center's faculty members on issues including the future of U.S. and NATO relations with Russia to international counterterrorism efforts. A highlight of the discussions was an in-depth debate facilitated by Representative Scott on Russia's possible involvement in Kyrgyzstan's

recently announced decision to close the NATO supply base at Manas.

As always, members of the United States military contributed greatly to the success of this trip. The logistics of such a trip, compressed into a tight time frame, are complicated and require lengthy and detailed preparation. Our military escorts were from the Air Force's Legislative Liaison Office and the aircrew was from the 932nd Air Wing at Scott AFB, Illinois. They did an outstanding job, and I thank them for their hard work and dedication to duty.

EARMARK DISCLOSURE

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the House Republican standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act:

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Agriculture, Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service, RE/FA

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: University of Miami

Address of Requesting Entity: 1252 Memorial Drive, Coral Gables, FL, 33146

Description of Request: I have secured \$2,494,000 for Climate Forecasting, FL. This funding will be used to continue research on the application of climate forecasts. Climate variability significantly impacts agricultural production in the Southeastern United States. Agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the Southeastern economy and contributed \$14.3 billion to Florida, Georgia and Alabama economies in 2002. The Southeastern Climate Consortium reduces economic risks and improves social well-being by facilitating the effective use of climate information in agricultural decision-making. Members of the Southeastern Climate Consortium include the University of Miami, Florida State University, University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of Alabama at Huntsville, and Auburn University. Each university provides unique and complementary talent and expertise in the necessary research areas. For example, the University of Miami will provide socioeconomic modeling and analyses of the agricultural system and characterize the linkages among water management and farming. Previous funding for this project includes \$2,675,000 in FY08 and \$3,600,000 in FY06. It is my understanding that all participating Universities will receive a portion of this funding.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Agriculture, Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service, SRG

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Services

Address of Requesting Entity: 700 Experiment Station Road, Lake Alfred, FL 33850

Description of Request: I have secured \$1,217,000 for Citrus Canker/Greening, FL. The funding will be used to continue the vital citrus canker and greening research being conducted by the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Services (IFAS), to improve technologies for treatment and detection, methods of movement and containment, and means to control and eliminate citrus canker and greening. As a result of the 2004 and 2005 hurricane season it has become evident that the eradication of citrus canker in Florida is not feasible, therefore it is vital that the scientific community find a disease resistant crop or a cure to the disease to protect the citrus industry, which is a vital part of the Florida economy, from these devastating diseases. The continued research on citrus canker and greening is a joint effort among the State of Florida, University of Florida and citrus industry. The project is estimated to cost approximately \$16 million in total. The University of Florida has received \$3 million from the Florida State Legislature and \$7 million from citrus growers for work on this important project. Previously the University of Florida has received \$1.35 million in FY08, \$500,000 in FY06 and \$474,000 in FY07 for this project. It is my understanding that the University of Florida will provide \$3 million in cost-share funding.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Justice, COPS Law Enforcement Technology

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Doral

Address of Requesting Entity: 8300 NW 53rd St, Suite 100, Doral, FL 33166

Description of Request: I have secured \$500,000 for the City of Doral Police Department. This funding will be used to offset the cost of purchases made to establish a new police department in the City of Doral which was incorporated in 2003 and has grown at a rate of 71%. The City of Doral recently opened its own police department after sharing services with the Miami-Dade County Police Department for the past several years. The City opened its department in order to effectively provide for the rapidly growing community's traffic, public safety and law enforcement needs. Funds provided will be used for equipment purchases include protective gear, communications devices, hardware/software and technology upgrades. The project is estimated to cost a total of \$17 million. It is my understanding that the city has received \$1,500,000 through the Community Budget Issue Request Funding provided by the State of Florida that will be utilized as a cost-share for this project.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Justice, COPS Law Enforcement Technology

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Collier County, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 3301 E. Tamiami Trail, Naples, FL 34112

Description of Request: I have secured \$350,000 for the Emergency Services Technology. The funding will be used to support

the acquisition of public safety equipment for the County's new Emergency Services Center. Current public safety technology equipment is outdated and hindering the ability for the local law enforcement officials to work effectively. Funding will go towards procurement of GIS and improved interoperable communications technology. The Emergency Services Center, currently under construction, is a 130,000 square foot, four story complex and includes a communications tower. Upon completion, occupants will include the Emergency Management staff, Emergency Operations Center, Information Technology, Sheriff's Substation and 911 Center, and Clerk of Courts. The total cost of technology acquisition is approximately \$10,000,000. It is my understanding that the County has committed to funding construction of the \$56,000,000 complex with the help of \$3,204,000 provided by the State of Florida as a cost-share for this project. This project received \$352,500 in FY08.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Justice, OJP—Juvenile Justice

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: The ARISE Foundation

Address of Requesting Entity: 824 US Hwy 1, Suite 240, North Palm Beach, FL, 33408-3838

Description of Request: I have secured \$300,000 for the ARISE Life-Management Skills Intervention/ Re-entry Program for High Risk Youth. The funding will be used by The ARISE Foundation to provide juvenile justice facilities with specialized staff training and unique curricula to teach life lessons and develop thinking skills for incarcerated youth needed to break the cycle of violence and crime in order to reduce recidivism rates. The ARISE foundation serves approximately 31 facilities providing juvenile justice and has trained over 5,250 certified life skills instructors who have taught over 3.7 million hours of life skills lessons. The material provided contains vital information used to reduce recidivism by learning life-management lessons. The ARISE foundation plans to expand its training program for Juvenile Crime and Detention Officers in Florida's Juvenile Justice facilities by introducing additional training topics such as anger management, non-judgmental listening and conflict resolution. This project has received previous funding including \$728,500 in FY08, \$250,000 in FY06, \$250,000 in FY05, \$500,000 in FY04 and \$500,000 in FY03. It is my understanding that this project will receive cost-share funds in the form of \$150,000 from sales of curriculum and training and \$100,000 from private foundation grants.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, Construction

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: South Florida Water Management District

Address of Requesting Entity: 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Description of Request: I have secured \$123,448,000 for the South Florida Everglades Ecosystem Restoration, FL. The focus of Everglades Restoration is to restore, protect and

preserve the defining ecological features of the original Everglades and the South Florida ecosystem. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) was originally enacted in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. This Plan includes 68 different projects designed with the goal of restoring historic waterflows to the Florida Everglades. This project is a 50/50 cost-share with the Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Florida. To date the State of Florida has invested in excess of \$2 billion for CERP, the ACOE has invested just over \$340 million. In FY08 this project received \$130,669,000. It is my understanding that this funding will be utilized by the State to serve as the Federal share of the 50/50 cost-share arrangement established in WRDA 2000.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, Construction

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: South Florida Water Management District

Address of Requesting Entity: 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Description of Request: I have secured \$3,472,000 for the South Florida Everglades Ecosystem Restoration, FL Everglades and S. Florida Ecosystem Restoration, FL. The focus of Everglades Restoration is to restore, protect and preserve the defining ecological features of the original Everglades and the South Florida ecosystem. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) was originally enacted in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. This Plan includes 68 different projects designed with the goal of restoring historic waterflows to the Florida Everglades. This project is a 50/50 cost-share with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the State of Florida. To date the State of Florida has invested in excess of \$2 billion for CERP, the ACOE has invested just over \$340 million. In FY08 this project received \$130,669,000. It is my understanding that this funding will be utilized by the State to serve as the Federal share of the 50/50 cost-share arrangement established in WRDA 2000.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, Investigations

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Miami-Dade County, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 111 NW 1ST St, Suite 1032, Miami, FL 33128

Description of Request: I have secured \$478,000 for the Miami Harbor, FL. The funding will be used to begin the Miami Harbor Phase III dredging project authorized under the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The project will deepen the Port of Miami to 50–52 feet in order to accommodate the larger container ships which are becoming the industry standard. Implementation includes design, preparation of plans and specification for bidding. Miami Harbor is a major economic force, accounting for over 98,000 jobs and \$12 billion in annual economic impact. The total project cost is \$154,300,000 with an additional \$3,800,000 in PED (\$2,670,000 Federal and \$1,220,000 Non-Federal). Expected Federal Share based on Federal Statute is

\$73,060,000. The Non-Federal Share is \$81,240,000. It is my understanding that Miami-Dade County intends to invest \$1,220,000 and other Federal Sources will be investing \$670,000 as a cost-share for this project.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, O & M
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Miami-Dade County, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 111 NW 1ST St, Suite 1032, Miami, FL 33128

Description of Request: I have secured \$10,043,000 for the Miami River, FL. The funding will be used to implement the final phase of the Miami River Dredging Project, seeking to restore the authorized depth and width to the navigational channel. The project aims to remove contaminated sediments from the Miami River, which is Florida's 4th largest port with an economic value of \$4 billion. The River has not been dredged since it was originally dredged to be navigational in the 1930s. The dredging provides improve navigation as well as enhances the environmental quality of the River and Biscayne Bay. This funding will enable the ACOE to complete this project. \$40,000,000 has previously been Appropriated for this project. The State of Florida has provided a minimum of \$2 billion to act as a 50/50 partner. It is my understanding that funding allocation and cost-sharing will include \$4,700,000 from Miami-Dade County, \$3,300,000 from the City of Miami, \$19,200,000 from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and \$9,700,000 from the South Florida Water Management District.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Energy, Science
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Barry University

Address of Requesting Entity: 11300 NE Second Ave, Miami Shores, FL 33161

Description of Request: I have secured \$761,200 for the Barry University Institute for Collaborative Sciences Research. The funding will be used to expand and renovate the collaborative research, laboratories and teaching facilities and instrumentation as well as to expand support for faculty and student development. Barry University requires more critical laboratory and teaching space to develop its potential as a research facility to further their mission to prepare leaders from the minority community in health professions and facilitate nationally valuable evidence-based research. This project has previously received \$400,000 in FY08.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, Construction

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: South Florida Water Management District

Address of Requesting Entity: 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Description of Request: I have secured \$74,069,000 for the Herbert Hoover Dike, FL (Seepage Control). This vital project, which is currently underway, is providing vital security

by constructing a seepage cutoff wall that will protect the Dike from seepage as well as protect the local community by preventing a breach in the Dike during a Hurricane. This project is authorized under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1930 and received \$54,883,584 million in FY08. It is my understanding that this is a 100% Federal project and all funding will be utilized for further construction work on the Dike.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Health Facilities and Services

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine

Address of Requesting Entity: 1601 NW 12th Avenue, 9th Floor, Miami, FL 33136.

Description of Request: I have secured \$238,000 for purchase of equipment for the Pediatric Integrative Medical Center at the University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine. The funding will be used to develop a pioneer center for excellence for a pediatric integrative medicine model where research and delivery of care are emphasized. The model will utilize Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) in concert with conventional medicine to improve the standards of care. It is becoming more and more evident that all health problems cannot be solved through traditional medical interventions, many factors, such as diet, lifestyle and environment play an important role in pediatric health. Currently, CAM has not been tested extensively in pediatrics, and adult studies cannot be extrapolated to pediatrics. This Center will focus on evaluating CAM and a pediatric integrative medicine model in order to develop the most effective interventions and develop rigorous scientific methodology. The model will allow cross-communication between pediatricians, disease management specialists and CAM practitioners with a single point of contact with the patient in order to provide comprehensive and efficient delivery model.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Health Facilities and Services

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Homestead, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 790 North Homestead Blvd., Homestead, FL 33030

Description of Request: I have secured \$190,000 for facilities and equipment at the Bill Dickinson Senior Center. The funding will be used for construction, renovation and equipment to expand the Bill Dickinson Senior Center. The expansion is necessary to accommodate the growing number of members and to allow the Center to provide dedicated medical rooms geared toward health, therapy/fitness services and health screening. This project received \$375,000 in FY04 and \$125,000 in FY05. It is my understanding that the City of Homestead will provide \$5,800,000 for design and construction and the Florida State Division of Cultural Affairs will provide \$346,500 in cost-share funding.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Health Facilities and Services

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Collier County, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 3301 E. Tamiami Trail, Naples, FL 34112

Description of Request: I have secured \$143,000 for healthcare access network for the uninsured, including purchase of equipment for Collier County, FL. The funding will be used to support and further develop a health care access network for the under/uninsured in Collier County. Collier County has identified over 35,000 residents who lack quality health care and currently is experiencing overuse of its emergency health facilities. This project seeks to expand, organize, and develop a full access program with a full continuum of services for approximately 35,000 residents needing health care. The initial phase of this project has been the adoption of a shared information database between the portals of entry for the poor into the system. Future phases of the project include marketing and full penetration of the population of uninsured/underinsured individuals. The total cost of this project is approximately \$5 million. This project received \$327,183 in FY08. It is my understanding that local healthcare providers will contribute approximately \$1,000,000 in services, community foundations will provide \$370,000 and Collier County will provide matching funds of approximately \$130,000 for staff salaries.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Economic Development Initiatives

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Miami-Dade College

Address of Requesting Entity: 11011 SW 104 St, Miami, FL 33176

Description of Request: I have secured \$142,500 for the development and construction of an Environmental and Ecological Study Center. The funding will go towards the development and construction of an Environmental and Ecological Study Center at Miami-Dade College. The facility will be a dynamic education resource center and environmental showcase consisting of a single family "house" where students and visitors can see ecologically sound best practices. It will have the external appearance of a south Florida home and will have flexible meeting areas for workshops, conferences, demonstration areas and office space. The Center will model environmentally sustainable construction design and will provide local residents, consumers, designers, builders, environmentalists and others with a single source for integrated and practical ways to make homes greener, safer, stronger and smarter. The Center will deliver formal and informal education in support of major national and state environmental priorities including energy efficiency and conservation, hurricane and flood protection, water conservation and management, asthma, mold and other indoor air hazards and access for the disabled. It is my understanding that Miami-Dade College intends to provide a local match of \$319,266.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Authority, Bus and Bus Facilities

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Town of Miami Lakes, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 15700 NW 67th Ave, Miami Lakes, FL 33014

Description of Request: I have secured \$570,000 for the Miami Lakes Hybrid Electric Vehicles and Trolleybus Procurement, FL. The funding will be used for the second phase of the vehicle procurement program. The funding will go towards the procurement of hybrid electrical vehicles which provide negligible emissions and low-floor designs. The vehicles will be part of the trolleybus service that is currently being implemented. The service is designed to provide general transportation throughout the town, primarily focusing on east-west directional travel currently not serviced by the County bus system, transportation for students and parents to and from Bob Graham Education Center during the morning commencement and afternoon dismissal periods, a mid-day lunch route service for the business parks, and lastly, a paratransit, door-to-door bus service for senior citizens. The general circulator will mitigate their growing traffic congestion problems and the potential safety concerns stemmed by increased vehicular traffic. The funds will go towards the purchase of a new bus with an estimated cost of \$400,000 and operations and maintenance. It is my understanding that this project has received \$400,000 from the State Department of Transportation for operations and the Town will fund the remaining operations budget with revenues from a local transportation sales tax. This project received \$300,000 in FY08.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Economic Development Initiatives

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Miami Military Museum

Address of Requesting Entity: 1825 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Coral Gables, FL 33134

Description of Request: I have secured \$118,750 for the relocation, restoration and rehabilitation of a historic military structure called the Miami Military Museum. The funding will be used to relocate, restore and rehabilitate the historic structure into a military museum, veterans memorial and education center. The structure served as a control base and headquarters for the blimps that protected the South Florida coastline and Caribbean during World War II, an intelligence base during the Cold War and the Cuban Missile Crisis, an Army Reserve Center, and a Marine Corps Reserve Center during Desert Storm. In addition to serving as a museum, the restored facility will serve as a research library and classroom space to accommodate school field trips. It is my understanding that this project is expected to receive \$2,000,000 from Miami-Dade County and has previously received \$350,000.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Authority, Bus and Bus Facilities

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Doral, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 8300 NW 53rd St, Suite 100, Doral, FL 33166.

Description of Request: I have secured \$475,000 for the Doral Transit Circulator Program. The funding will be used to further implement the Doral Transit Circulator program. This program allows the City to provide public transportation services to help alleviate traffic congestion and to connect residential areas with recreational, retail and commercial facilities. Once primarily composed of agricultural and industrial tracts, City of Doral has established itself as a major center of wholesale international trade and a booming office, commercial, and residential community. Approximately 35,000 people live in Doral and over 100,000 more travel to and through the city each day for employment and business activities. Due to its proximity to the urban core of Miami-Dade and major transportation facilities, as well as the rapid development of its component communities, Doral contends with a unique array of transportation concerns that require immediate and significant attention. It is my understanding that the City of Doral will provide \$250,000 in matching funds towards this project.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Transportation, Federal Lands (Public Lands Highways)

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Miccosukee Reservation, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: P.O. Box 440021, Tamiami Station, Miami, FL 33144.

Description of Request: I have secured \$760,000 for the Snake Road Safety Improvements. The funding will be used to design the recommended alternative to widen the existing shoulders on Snake Road within the Miccosukee Tribe Reservation to address significant safety concerns. Two studies conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs concluded that Snake Road is in serious need of realignment and repair, where from 1997-2000 70 accidents occurred resulting in 6 deaths. The project would fund the alternative selected by the Florida Department of Transportation following a PD&E Study which has the least environmental impact and is the most cost effective. Total cost of the project is \$1,079,600. It is my understanding that the Tribe will provide the remaining funding necessary for the project to be completed as a local match.

Requesting Member: Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART (FL-25)

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act

Account: Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Authority, Capital Investment Grants

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Miami-Dade County, FL

Address of Requesting Entity: 111 NW 1ST St, Suite 1032, Miami, FL 33128

Description of Request: I have secured \$20,000,000 for the Metrorail Orange Line Extension Project, FL. This funding will be used for Phase II and III of the Metrorail Extension Project, the North Corridor and East-West

Corridor, respectively. Phase II is in the final planning stage for the construction of a 9.2-mile Metrorail extension along NW 27th Avenue and Phase III is a proposed East-West Rapid Transit Corridor that will run some 10–13 miles East from the Miami Intermodal Center to Florida International University and points west. Metrorail began service in 1984 and currently operates 22.4-miles of rapid transit line, however the region has experienced tremendous growth in the last 24 years, most of it occurring outside the current system boundaries, and is in need of an expanded Metrorail system. This Rail extension will allow more options for commuters and visitors as well as improve safety on the roadways and be more environmentally-friendly. This project was authorized in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users in 2005. The total cost of this project is an estimated \$1.6 billion. It is my understanding that the Florida Department of Transportation will invest \$452,700,000 and the Miami-Dade County People's Transportation Plan will invest an additional \$452,700,000 as the local match for this project.

URGING KAZAKHSTAN TO COMPLY
AND HONOR ITS CONTRACTS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a growing concern facing a U.S. friend and ally in oil-rich Central Asia, Kazakhstan. In light of the heightened concern over the global oil supply shortage, we want to give special recognition to the critical role that Kazakhstan plays as a major world-wide supplier, and therefore we urge in particular that the Government of Kazakhstan step up to the demands. In so doing, Kazakhstan leaders should be very cognizant of the need to comply with the rule and sanctity of its contracts and do its best to ensure proper appropriation of profits to its citizens.

Recently, Transparency International ranked Kazakhstan 150 on its Corruption Perceptions Index, with the worst country ranked 179. This puts Kazakhstan only slightly ahead of Hugo Chavez's Venezuela. The costs of corruption are exceedingly high—both for the Kazakh people, international investors and consumers—and will surely lead to the corrosion of that society.

In recent years, Kazakhstan's economy has grown tremendously because of its large oil deposits, and the political elite have been successful in virtually monopolizing the benefits of this boom. But, regrettably, Kazakhstan has become a centralistic and authoritarian state under the 27 year rule of President Nursultan Nazarbayev with little leverage for the development and activity of civil society.

Kazakhstan's governmental system lacks the basic features of democracy; elections are neither free nor fair, there are few independent media outlets and what political opposition exists is manipulated, harassed, physically attacked or even killed. There is massive corruption on a grand scale in this environment of intra-elite allocation of benefits connected to oil production. Corruption in Kazakhstan is

systemic, even within the country's anti-corruption agency, and no public office is free from executive interference. Long wait times, unwieldy bureaucracy, weak business law, short deadlines, employee discontent and the absence of explanatory information all breed corruption. Foreign firms have frequently reported harassment by the Financial Police in the form of unannounced inspections and intimidation. Forbes Asia Magazine reported that AES Corporation, an American company and one of the largest power companies in the world faced this type of harassment in June 2005. The Forbes article titled "Thug Capitalism," reported that AES was subjected to Financial Police raids and was forced to pay up to \$200 million in fines before they decided they had enough and withdrew from Kazakhstan.

Exxon Mobil, which is also in the consortium with ConocoPhillips, Eni, Total and Royal Dutch Shell experienced similar problems with the Kashagan project. The Kazakh government has repeatedly used delays and cost overruns to renegotiate its original terms with the consortium, using negotiating tactics similar to those perfected by Russia to extract concessions from foreign energy investors.

Both the international investor community and the Kazakh people have every reason to be concerned over the Kazakh government's increasingly heavy-handed intrusion into business activity, especially in the energy sector. According to a recent report by ABC News: "The U.S. Department of Justice prosecutors have long alleged in court documents filed in a case against a U.S. businessman that President Nazarbayev and his deputies accepted nearly \$80 million in kickback from foreign companies in exchange for access to Kazakhstan's vast oilfields."

And perhaps the largest concern of all is the precedent set when this, or any, government is rampant with corrupt practices. Nations and lives become unglued. Take for instance the assassination attempt on the former head of Kazakhstan's National Security Service in Vienna. According to Radio Ekho Moskv, Alnur Musayev and his companion were both wounded; and simultaneously, that the ex-bassard of Kazakhstan in Austria who is also the former son-in-law of the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Rikhat Aliyev, was targeted but escaped. These events were officially confirmed by the spokesman of the Austrian Office of Public Prosecutor, Gerhard Jarosh. Exiled citizens must not become targets of their home country. They must be free to live their lives and express themselves without threat of life or limb. Such is a fundamental right and expectation of all democracies and free nations.

Furthermore, the ex-Chairman of the National Security Committee of Kazakhstan was sentenced in absentia to 20 years of imprisonment. Rakhat Aliyev was also sentenced in absentia to 40 years in prison on multiple charges. However, when the Austrian Government investigated Kazakhstan's allegations of money laundering and corruption against Rakhat Aliyev, they found no evidence to substantiate such allegations, and thus have refused to extradite Mr. Aliyev for fear that he will never receive anything resembling a fair trial.

Such activities are all too reminiscent of a pattern of violence and corruption we have long seen in Russia, and nothing can be more

destabilizing both internally and externally. Moreover, these are not the qualities that we expect of the incoming Chair of the OSCE. Kazakhstan has made several promises to implement reforms that respect political freedoms and human rights. To date these reforms have not been implemented and on issues such as religious freedoms and freedom of the press, it is arguable that Kazakhstan is becoming more restrictive and less tolerant.

The United States has sought a mutually beneficial relationship with Kazakhstan and provides aid to Kazakhstan in order to enhance economic growth, democracy, security, civil society and attend to humanitarian needs. However, it is evident that the current U.S.-Kazakhstan relationship is compromised by Kazakhstan's record of human rights violations and lack of immediate and necessary reforms before ascending to the OSCE Chairmanship. The U.S. Department of State has criticized President Nursultan Nazarbayev's government for human rights violations. A report from March 2008 faulted the government for practices including "arbitrary arrest and detention", "restrictions on freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and association", "lack of an independent judiciary", "severe limits on citizens' rights to change their government," and more, including abuse of detainees and prisoners.

As an influential OSCE member and global leader, the U.S. must now more than ever, begin to raise questions regarding Kazakhstan's human rights record and about allegations that Kazakhstan has attempted to kidnap and injure its dissidents. Kidnapping and bodily harm have no place among nation states and Kazakhstan should be made to answer for any and all violations before it assumes the Chairmanship.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the House Republican standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD regarding earmarks I received as part of HR 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009:

Requesting Member: Rep. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Bill Number: HR 1105

Account: U.S. Department of Transportation/FHWA/Federal-Aid Highways

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: The City of Trenton

Address of Requesting Entity: Trenton City Hall, 319 E. State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

Description of Request: I have secured \$188,750 in funding for the city of Trenton to capitalize on the economic potential generated by the new \$70 million Trenton Train Station rehabilitation project. The City of Trenton has a redevelopment plan for the area requiring upgrading some critical road, pedestrian, and other infrastructure. The City of Trenton also plans to fund this project.

Requesting Member: Rep. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Bill Number: HR 1105

Account: U.S. Department of Transportation Buses and Bus Facilities

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: New Jersey Transit

Address of Requesting Entity: New Jersey Transit, One Penn Plaza, East Newark, NJ 07105

Description of Request: I have secured \$1,021,250 in funding for the Lakewood Township shuttle service project. This shuttle service would efficiently move people in this growing and congested area of Central New Jersey. The funding would be used to purchase additional shuttle buses, provide sheltered bus stops, establish loading and drop-off zones, provide parking for mass transit vehicles, and parking for private vehicles.

Requesting Member: Rep. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Bill Number: HR 1105

Account: U.S. Department of Transportation FTA New Starts

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: New Jersey Transit

Address of Requesting Entity: New Jersey Transit, One Penn Plaza, East Newark, NJ 07105

Description of Request: I have secured \$534,375 in funding for the MOM Line for the Design Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) stage. The MOM line would provide Central New Jersey residents with access to Northern New Jersey and New York City.

Requesting Member: Rep. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Bill Number: HR 1105

Account: U.S. Department of Transportation Bus and Bus Facilities

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: The Arc of Mercer County

Address of Requesting Entity: The Arc of Mercer County, 180 Ewingville Road, Ewing, NJ 08638

Description of Request: I have secured \$95,000 in funding for the Arc of Mercer County to provide cost effective transportation services for individuals with disabilities and senior citizens in the Mercer County area. This service is needed to supplement existing county and state services and provide efficiency through coordinated efforts. The Arc is also contributing to this project.

Requesting Member: Rep. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Bill Number: HR 1105

Account: Housing and Urban Development Department Economic Development Initiative Program

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: The Special Children's Center

Address of Requesting Entity: The Special Children's Center, Lakewood Township Municipal Building, 231 Third Street, Lakewood, NJ 08701.

Description of Request: I have secured \$142,500 in funding for the Special Children's Center. The funding would be used to help defer the costs of constructing a new building for the Special Children's Center. The Township of Lakewood has contributed toward the project and there have been private donations.

MEDICAL DEVICE SAFETY ACT OF 2009

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Medical Device Safety Act of 2009. This legislation was introduced today, and I'm proud to be an original cosponsor.

The Medical Device Safety Act of 2009 is needed to ensure that every American patient has the ability to hold manufacturers of defective medical devices accountable for injuries and deaths caused by unsafe products. It would also prevent these manufacturers from receiving total immunity from any claims simply by virtue of receiving a Food and Drug Administration device approval. This bill clarifies the intention of Congress to keep American patients safe by maintaining complementary systems to protect consumers through the FDA and American courts.

The need for this legislation was made evident in the Supreme Court's flawed decision in Riegel v. Medtronic, which completely ignored Congressional intent regarding the ability of injured patients to hold medical device manufacturers accountable for their injuries. This bill will restore Congress's original intent to allow injured patients to recover from their injuries caused by manufacturers of defective and dangerous medical devices.

It's important for Congress to promptly clarify its intent, because these types of issues continue to come up in courts around the country. Last Congress, I was proud to participate in a hearing in the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform which looked deeper into these types of issues. The medical safety experts agree that patient safety is compromised when we allow the FDA to have the final say on device safety. Strong state laws are critical to maintaining accountability for device manufacturers, and allowing the FDA to pre-empt these state laws is a surefire way to place sales over safety and profits over people.

The civil justice system and the federal regulatory system were always meant to complement each other. Both are necessary to adequately protect Americans. The FDA simply cannot do it alone, and we see examples of this all the time, from pacemakers to peanuts. The agency is understaffed and underfunded, and I support additional funding to help this critical agency. However, making the FDA the "court of last resort" on issues of life and death is a violation of the Bill of Rights and ignores over 200 years of Common Law precedents. This is just one more reason why Congress must pass the Medical Device Safety Act of 2009 to restore the balance between the civil justice system and the federal regulatory system that Congress intended when it passed the Medical Device Amendments of 1976.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DIANE E. WATSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from the Chamber during the evening of Monday, February 23, 2009. As a result, I was unable to cast my vote on rollcall No. 73, which occurred on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 44, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act. Had I been present I would have voted "yea," and also ask that the record reflect my strong support for the enactment of H.R. 44 and the fact that I am an original cosponsor of this bill which was reintroduced by our colleague from Guam, Ms. BORDALLO, on January 6, 2009.

HONORING ELIZABETH LITTLEFIELDS' SELFLESS ACT

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I am honored today to pay tribute to Elizabeth Littlefield, a hairdresser from Marana, Arizona. Ms. Littlefield has set an inspiring example for all Americans with one selfless act—the donation of one of her kidneys. It was not to a loved one or longtime friend that Littlefield made this generous donation, but to a customer whom she had known only a short time.

Ms. Littlefield's donated kidney went to Dale Charnick. Not long after Ms. Charnick became a customer of Ms. Littlefield's salon in 2006, both of her kidneys began shutting down. Upon learning of her customer's plight, Littlefield made the surprise offer that saved Ms. Charnick's life. "I have two good kidneys," Ms. Littlefield said. "You can have one of mine."

Now, as a result of Ms. Littlefield's donation, Ms. Charnick is on the road to a strong recovery. Ms. Littlefield's selfless act reminds us in a dramatic way what it means to help a person in need.

I also want to commend the extraordinary medical skills of the well-trained health care professionals at Tucson's University Medical Center for their role in giving Ms. Charnick's a new lease on life.

My constituents in Southern Arizona are indeed fortunate to have a new team of nationally recognized transplant experts in our community. This team includes: abdominal transplant chief Dr. Rainer Gruessner; nephrology chief Dr. Bruce Kaplan, who is also a deputy editor of the American Journal of Transplantation; vice chief of abdominal transplantation Dr. John Renz; Dr. Thomas Boyer, who is director of the Arizona Liver Institute; and Dr. Khalid Khan, director of the UA's Pediatric Liver and Intestinal Transplantation Program.

A TRIBUTE TO CLINTON M.
MILLER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Clinton Miller who is a pastor at Brown Memorial Baptist Church in the historic Clinton Hill section of Brooklyn.

Clinton Miller was born in Brooklyn, New York. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Southern Connecticut State University.

Rev. Miller first felt the divine calling of the gospel ministry at the age of 19 but did not actively pursue the vocation of ministry until he was a seminarian at Yale University. Upon graduation from divinity school in 1994, Rev. Miller continued training for the ministry as an intern minister at Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem under the guidance of Rev. Calvin O. Butts. Rev. Miller also was a teacher in the New York City Public School system for four years before entering full time ministry. Rev. Miller then became the youth minister for Abyssinian Baptist Church. In this capacity Rev. Miller developed several youth programs which have assisted the overall ministry of Abyssinian. His experiences with Dr. Butts have adequately prepared him for the full time pastorate in an urban locale.

In October of 2000, Rev. Miller was called to pastor Brown Memorial Baptist Church. Since assuming the pastorate at Brown, Rev. Miller has applied the functions of traditional ministry to this community of believers. Through preaching, teaching bible study, counseling and visitation, he has set a tone that will allow Brown Memorial's vision to be realized. He is interested in pursuing causes that closely affect the community like the need for more affordable housing, better youth services and a living wage for all working New Yorkers.

Currently Brown Memorial plans on launching new educational programs, a summer day camp and a long awaited banquet facility in the newly built church annex. Rev. Miller has begun a \$7M renovation of Brown Memorial Baptist Church's edifice, a landmarked building. It is Pastor Miller's vision to stabilize the ministry of Brown Memorial by demonstrating consistent Christian service, strong financial administration and sound preaching. Rev. Miller combines community service with personal faith in his ministry to help bring people closer in their relationship with God. The mission of his ministry at Brown Memorial is to introduce the Salvation of Jesus Christ to individuals through dynamic worship, relevant Christian education, responsible stewardship, inclusive fellowship and impacting evangelism.

He was ordained by the American Baptist Churches and the United Missionary Baptist Association of Greater New York. Rev. Miller is awaiting and pursuing the opportunity to achieve a doctorate degree in Ethics. He attempts to build his ministry around Christian concepts of fairness, justice and the development of genuine Christian community.

INTRODUCTION OF DISTRICT OF
COLUMBIA HATCH ACT REFORM
ACT OF 2009

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Hatch Act Reform Act of 2009, to eliminate discriminatory treatment of the District of Columbia, which alone among U.S. jurisdictions still falls under the federal Hatch Act, as it did before the Congress made the District an independent jurisdiction that today enacts its own local laws. This bill would retain federal Hatch Act authority concerning prohibited partisan and political activity that applies to every state and locality upon receipt of federal funds or functions, and importantly, would require the District to enact its own local version of the Hatch Act barring similar local violations to become effective. Local Hatch Act violations in the District are rare, but the District needs its own Hatch Act to fully account and be responsible for local violations, with which only a local, objective body would be familiar.

This bill will leave in place the federal Hatch Act restrictions that apply to other jurisdictions on the use of official authority, specifically as it relates to elections; the solicitation, acceptance, or receipt of political campaign contributions; the prohibitions on running for public office in partisan elections; and the use of on-duty time and resources to engage in partisan campaign activity when federal funds or responsibilities are involved. My bill would remove only the federal Hatch Act jurisdiction that applies solely to the District of Columbia and would require the District to have its own local Hatch Act, like every other jurisdiction, instead of requiring the federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and its Special Counsel to devote staff time and other resources on investigation, fact-finding and judgment of unfamiliar local matters.

Indeed, OPM has asked for the federal guidance my bill offers. In recent cases, OPM cited an ANC (Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner) commissioner for violations of the Hatch Act when he ran for higher office, even though ANC commissioners are "elected officials" under D.C. law. As a result of the failure to clear up the confusion between local and federal jurisdictions, the application of the Hatch Act to ANC commissioners has been selectively enforced by OPM. For example, OPM recently filed cases charging Hatch Act violations against an ANC commissioner running for the D.C. Council but did not file when several members of the current D.C. City Council ran for the D.C. Council on positions as ANC commissioners. The present law results in possible violations of the federal Hatch Act while leaving OPM with local responsibility that does not implicate its federal jurisdiction.

The House recognized that the present federal Hatch Act jurisdiction over the District was inappropriate and obsolete and removed this federal responsibility several years ago, but the Senate failed to act. The District should bear this local responsibility. My bill will eliminate the double indignity of placing a local burden on the federal government and depriving the District of a responsibility, which only local jurisdictions familiar with local laws can be expected to handle responsibly.

The Hatch Act Reform is the fourth in the "Free and Equal D.C." series of bills that I have introduced to eliminate anti-Home Rule or redundant bills that deprive the city of equal treatment and recognition as an independent self-governing jurisdiction. This uncomplicated and straightforward bill is not controversial, has been enacted before by the House and should be passed forthwith.

**HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009**

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106 to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 1106, the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act of 2009.

I want to commend Chairman CONYERS, Chairman FRANK and Speaker PELOSI for their dedication and work in bringing this bill to the floor.

Of course, I would have preferred to vote on the prior, more robust version of this bill, but nevertheless this is an important step forward that will help keep families in their homes.

As we all know the roots of the current economic crisis are grounded in the housing market and the greedy lending practices of the banks.

Many of us warned about this impending housing crisis years ago. As a member of the Financial Services committee for eight years, I remember expressing my concern about the housing bubble and the subprime loans that were fueling it and the consequences to our economy if the bubble popped.

But our warnings fell on deaf ears.

When we tried to encourage the banks to participate in voluntary foreclosure prevention programs to help families in distress, they balked and made every excuse to avoid participating.

Then the economy tanked and they begged us for a bail out.

Now millions more families are threatened with bankruptcy and foreclosure. That's why we are taking this step today, to restore some equity to our bankruptcy laws to allow judicial modifications of mortgages on primary residences and to help keep families in their homes.

I applaud the improvements to the Hope for Homeowners program that are also included in this legislation. We had to address the low rate of participation in this voluntary program and I know that the improvements included here will provide many more homeowners with a way to work out new, affordable mortgages and to continue making their mortgage payments.

Passing this bill will be an important step in stabilizing the housing markets because not only will we help families protect their homes and their assets during this economic crisis, we will strengthen our entire banking system by making permanent the increase in the FDIC insurance limits to \$250,000. This will

protect the savings of every American and will increase confidence in the banking systems both here and abroad.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 1106.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosure and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1106, the "Helping Families Save Their Homes Act." This legislation is needed now more than ever, and I want to commend Chairman FRANK, Chairman CONYERS, and the Leadership for working together to bring this bill to the Floor.

It is important to remember that behind the economic and housing statistics are real people—the hard-working Americans and their families who are facing difficulties paying their bills every day. H.R. 1106 contains several key provisions to ensure that homeowners will have more options available to them to stay in their homes.

The bill before us would make necessary improvements to the Hope for Homeowners program including reducing current fees that have discouraged lenders from voluntarily participating and offering a \$1,000 incentive payment to servicers for each successful refinancing of existing loans. H.R. 1106 will ensure that predatory lenders, who bear some of the responsibility for today's housing situation, will not be approved as lenders under FHA programs. The legislation also provides a safe harbor from liability to mortgage servicers who engage in certain loan modifications, and it makes permanent an increase, from \$100,000 to \$250,000, in the amount of bank or credit union deposits insured by Federal banks and credit union regulators. H.R. 1106 establishes a 5-year restoration plan for the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) which is currently required to restore the equity ratio of the Share Insurance Fund within one year.

I think most of us agree that bankruptcy should be the option of last resort. However, for those homeowners facing bankruptcy, H.R. 1106 will allow bankruptcy judges to reduce the principal, extend the repayment period, or authorize the reduction of an exorbitant interest rate to a level that helps make a mortgage more affordable. I am glad that we have been able to make changes to this legislation that will enable homeowners to stay in their homes, while at the same time providing greater certainty to lenders and to the secondary market.

I am hopeful that this bill will help to stem the tide of foreclosures and ensure that our neighborhoods do not experience a cascade of increased vacant lots and decreased property values.

The President has proposed a plan to help make it easier for homeowners, including those who are still in repayment but at risk for

default, to refinance their mortgages at around the current market rate, or modify their loans. H.R. 1106 is an important step in moving forward with that plan. We must act now. The American people deserve no less than our full commitment to helping them through these troubled times.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act of 2009 (H.R. 1106), and to commend Chairman FRANK, Chairman CONYERS, and the Financial Services and Judiciary Committees for their leadership and hard work on this measure. I urge my colleagues to support it.

No doubt, the experience of my colleagues is the same as when the economy spiraled out of control last year, my constituents did not call me and write me and come to my Town Hall meetings saying "please give my hard-earned taxpayer dollars to Wall Street. Wall Street is really hurting, and I want to do my part to help." No, they came to me saying "I am in trouble. I played by the rules. I did everything right, but my life is falling apart, and my home is about to be taken away. Please help me." We responded a few weeks ago by enacting the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to help stimulate the economy and get people back to work while providing for the essential services people need to get by. Today, we are taking another very important step by responding to the foreclosure crisis that is at the root of the recession.

The foreclosure crisis is a vicious cycle. Due to plummeting home values in recent years, an estimated 14 million homeowners owe more on their homes than their homes are worth; their mortgages are "under water". For a variety of reasons, including predatory lending abuses, exploding adjustable rate mortgage payments, and increasing job losses, homeowners all over the country have tried to refinance their mortgages into lower rates just to make ends meet. But the decreased values of their homes made that impossible. Unable to afford their current mortgage payments, unable to refinance them, and unable to sell the homes due to the depressed housing market, many face foreclosure. According to the trade research organization RealtyTrac, lenders made foreclosure filings on 2.3 million properties last year alone. Each foreclosed home reduces nearby property values by as much as 9 percent, sending those surrounding homes down the path towards being under water. And the cycle continues. Congress must act, must act now, and must act with force and determination.

The Helping Families Save Their Homes Act attacks the foreclosure crisis aggressively, and

approaches the problem from many angles at once, but is measured in its application. The bill would help millions of homeowners stay in their homes, by including incentives to encourage lenders to negotiate affordable mortgages for homeowners whose mortgages are under water, who are at risk of foreclosure, and who are facing bankruptcy. For example, it would modify the Hope for Homeowners program by reducing the fees that discouraged lenders from voluntarily participating in that program last year, and by providing for a \$1,000 incentive payment to servicers for each successful refinancing of an existing loan.

The bill also provides special protections for veterans, by allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), and U.S. Department of Agriculture to guarantee and/or insure mortgage loans that have been administratively or judicially modified. Therefore the bill would provide additional financial incentives for lenders to voluntarily modify mortgage loans instead of foreclosing. The bill also would expand the FHA's mortgage loan modification abilities by allowing a reduction of interest payments of up to 30 percent of the outstanding loan balance.

Most importantly, the bill would pay for adjustments to existing programs by tapping into \$2.316 billion in already-authorized funding under the Troubled Assets Relief Program enacted last year. Therefore, to be clear—this is not a "new bailout." This bill gives back to taxpayers more than 2 billion taxpayer dollars that previously had been allocated to Wall Street by previously-enacted legislation.

In addition to incentivizing lenders to modify mortgages to keep families in their homes, the bill would give homeowners an important new tool to fend for themselves: judicial modification of primary home loans. By allowing bankruptcy judges to modify the terms of the home mortgages at the core of the economic crisis—the mortgages already issued prior to enactment of this bill under terms, conditions and circumstances that forced so many of them into foreclosure or the brink of failure—we help our constituents remain in their homes under revised payment plans they can afford. This important protection also does not cost taxpayers anything, but it could reduce foreclosures by 20 percent.

The mere fact that homeowners have judicial modification of primary home mortgages available as an option, which is already available for vacation home loans and other consumer loans, will further encourage lenders to modify mortgages before borrowers file for bankruptcy. In addition, as it would be further fine-tuned by the Conyers amendment, the bill would apply a "good faith" test to deny bankruptcy modification relief to individuals who can afford to repay their mortgages without it, and extend the negotiation period requiring the debtor to certify that he or she contacted the lender and sought to reach agreement on a qualified loan modification. As perfected, the amendment would also allow a court to consider, in lieu of reducing principal in a modification, reducing the interest rate to lower the borrower's monthly payment; enhance the "good faith" test restricting the use of judicial modification to reduce principal by requiring courts to determine whether a lender offered to modify the loan and whether the debtor could afford the offered modification; and increase the proportion of appreciation on a home that a lender could recoup in a sale

within five years after the modification. The bill already includes a provision protecting mortgage servicers from lawsuits by investors who may be unhappy with the mortgage modifications.

Some have expressed the concern that this bankruptcy option will increase the cost of borrowing for other homeowners. Compared to the alternative of foreclosure, however, judicial modification should maximize, rather than decrease, the value of troubled mortgages for the lender. According to economist Mark Zandi, “[g]iven that the total cost of foreclosure to lenders is much greater than that associated with a Chapter 13 bankruptcy, there is no reason to believe that the cost of mortgage credit across all mortgage loan products should rise.” In addition, because the bankruptcy modification right only applies to mortgages issued before enactment of the bill, home mortgages issued in the future will be viewed as more stable, reliable and predictable than loans that can be modified in bankruptcy, and capital should again in the future readily flow to the home mortgage industry as it did in the past.

The bill also recognizes that unchecked predatory lending activity was one of the root causes of the crisis we face today and attacks that problem directly in several ways. For example, it requires the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to approve all parties participating in the FHA single family mortgage origination process, allows HUD to impose a civil money penalty against loan originators which are not HUD-approved but participate in FHA mortgage originations, and establishes other rigorous conditions on eligibility for would-be participants in the program.

Finally, it makes permanent an increase, from \$100,000 to \$250,000, in the amount of bank or credit union deposits insured by Federal banks and credit union regulators, and increases these regulators’ authority to obtain additional liquidity from the US Treasury. It is an aggressive and comprehensive, but thoughtful and measured bill. It puts taxpayers first, and most of it costs nothing or is already paid for by taking taxpayer funds that had been allocated to Wall Street and returning them to Main Street. I urge my colleagues to support it.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act.

This important bill will help more Americans stay in their homes by addressing a major flaw in the Hope for Homeowners Program and by extending to single residence homeowners an option currently only available to owners of second and third homes.

The Hope for Homeowners program was established in October of last year by the

Bush Administration to help more Americans refinance. The Congressional Budget Office projected the program would let 400,000 troubled homeowners swap risky loans for conventional 30-year fixed rate loans with lower rates.

But, because of flaws in the program, and despite the tremendous resources the government is making available to banks, none of the major mortgage lenders have been willing to make the new mortgages required to refinance distressed properties. To date, only 25 loans have been renegotiated nationwide.

So we gather here today to make the changes necessary so that more homeowners can take advantage of this important program.

The bill makes two important changes: It reduces the fees and administrative burdens to loan underwriters by making the requirements associated with refinances more consistent with standard FHA practices. Also, the bill permits the Hope for Homeowners Program to pay lenders up to \$1,000 to refinance each mortgage, and provides a safe harbor from liability to mortgage servicers who engage in loan modifications, workouts or other loss mitigation.

To pay for these important changes, the bill is offset by a \$2.316 billion reduction in the \$700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program.

For those homeowners facing bankruptcy, the bill permits judges to reduce the principal, interest rates, and fees owed on mortgages for primary residences. This is the same option already available for owners of yachts and vacation homes. The measure allows courts to reduce the principal on such mortgages to the current market value of the home, from the higher amount specified in the original mortgage. This provision should encourage banks to work with homeowners upfront and to exhaust every option so as to avoid having to settle the issue before a judge.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act. By helping struggling homeowners, we are helping reduce the number of foreclosed homes in our communities which should help stabilize home prices and strengthen our economy.

INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH INCREASED STUDENT SUPPORT ACT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the “Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act,” which Congresswoman LINDA SÁNCHEZ, Congressman POLIS and I proudly reintroduced today. This bill will increase the number and availability of school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists in qualified urban and rural low-income districts.

More and more we are finding that schools in underserved communities suffer disproportionately from a lack of support services, with many schools sharing only one social worker, school psychologist, or school counselor with neighboring schools. With this poor ratio of personnel to students, it is difficult to effectively and adequately address the needs of

students, leaving the important job of monitoring the child’s emotional and mental wellbeing to the teacher. When teachers are left to address these issues on their own, they have less time to deliver quality instruction and raise student achievement. It is not surprising then, that low-income schools experience high teacher turnover and frequent complaints of inadequate support. In fact, in our urban, public schools in 2003–04, 30.2 percent of teachers reported student acts of disrespect for teachers on at least a weekly basis and 18.5 percent reported student verbal abuse of teachers on at least a weekly basis.

To address these social and behavior issues, students require the attention of school counselors, school social workers and school psychologists.

For these reasons, along with Congresswoman LINDA SÁNCHEZ and Congressman JARED POLIS, I am reintroducing the Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act. This legislation will create funding to form partnerships between higher education institutions that train school counselors, school social workers and school psychologists and qualified low-income schools, placing these student support professionals where they are needed most.

I urge my colleagues to support the “Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act” to ensure quality education for our children nationwide.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act and in support of President Obama’s Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan.

We simply cannot overstate the effect that the housing crisis has had on our economy. Foreclosures continue to decimate both our financial system and the neighborhoods that we call home. In Rhode Island, we are suffering from the highest foreclosure rate in New England and housing prices have dropped 25 percent in the last year.

President Obama’s plan is a welcome recognition that we cannot begin to resolve our economic crisis without first stemming the tide of foreclosures. Under his leadership, the Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan will help up to 7 to 9 million American families restructure their mortgages to avoid foreclosure. This plan will help responsible homeowners in danger as well as our neighbors, our banks and our local economies. For example, this initiative will save the average homeowner from price declines of as much as \$6,000 in the value of their home.

It is long past time for a President who recognizes that bold action is needed to curb the foreclosure crisis. Bankruptcy judges must be given the power to adjust mortgages on primary residences. The language in the bill we

are debating today is very similar to legislation I cosponsored earlier this Congress and I applaud President Obama for his leadership on this issue.

Yet, there are some banks that claim this legislation will make homeowners choose bankruptcy over working out their mortgages. These are the same banks that have flatly refused to help work out those mortgages over the last year. These concerns have been directly addressed. To make sure nobody abuses the courts, this legislation will require all homeowners seeking bankruptcy protection to certify that they first attempted to modify their mortgage with the banks.

Every time we try to reform our financial system, we are told by industry and skeptic alike that consumer protections like those in the Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan might “destabilize” the market. Our government accepted that advice for much of the last decade and it landed us in an economic crisis. The great people of Rhode Island have watched their home equity plummet because of reckless behavior on Wall Street. Frankly, that is the kind of destabilization I am worried about.

It is true that this legislation will make a number of important revisions to the Hope for Homeowners Program. However, the real problem with Hope for Homeowners was that the lending industry never had any interest in participating. Until homeowners have some bargaining power and the lending industry understands that these loans must be reworked, there will be no real progress. Currently, bankruptcy judges can change the terms of loans for automobiles, stores, vacation homes and factories but not primary mortgages. It's time we let them do something much more important: help Americans to keep their houses.

This plan will empower homeowners and give lenders the incentive they need to save millions of mortgages from foreclosure. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in Congress and with President Obama to tackle the housing crisis and restore America's economy.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chair, H.R. 1106 is a combination of several free-standing bills, all of which touch on financial services and which are intended to address the mortgage situation. While I support some aspects of H.R. 1106, such as updates to the Federal Credit Union Act and a servicer safe harbor for loan modifications, the bill goes far beyond this by expanding the failed Hope for Homeowners program and allowing judicial “cram downs” in bankruptcy cases. “Cram down” will significantly raise the cost of mortgages for all borrowers by enabling bankruptcy judges to rewrite the terms of mortgages. The House Fi-

ancial Services Committee has never held a hearing on the impact of “cram down.” My amendment to the Committee's Oversight Plan, accepted unanimously on February 11, directed the Committee to investigate the potential impacts of “cram down” legislation including its effects on the cost of mortgages, the taxpayers and the secondary market for mortgages.

Despite a dismal performance record, this bill throws more money at the Hope for Homeowners (H4H) program, which I am informed has helped a mere 43 borrowers. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that expanding this program will help no more than 25,000 borrowers at a cost of \$23,000 each. We also know that the changes the bill makes to H4H will weaken important taxpayer safeguards, leaving taxpayers to foot the bill directly for additional defaults.

A significant concern I have with H.R. 1106 is the cram-down provision. The “cram down” provision would allow bankruptcy judges to change the terms of a mortgage loan for a primary residence, overturning a century of bankruptcy code and practice. Proponents of “cram down” are quick to argue that bankruptcy judges should have the authority to help everyone stay in their homes. Anyone with common sense knows that higher risk or greater uncertainty will raise interest rates. Opening the possibility of “cram down” across the board for all primary residences adds uncertainty in the market and it will lead to higher interest rates across the board for all home buyers. Everyone, including responsible buyers, will be forced to foot the bill for speculators and those who make poor purchasing decisions as the costs of those decisions are spread across all borrowers. For more than 100 years primary residences have been exempted from “cram down” bankruptcy proceedings precisely to help keep mortgage interest rates lower and homes more affordable. At a February 11 House Financial Services Committee hearing, I asked the nation's leading lenders what would happen if Congress passed “cram down.” Their response was overwhelmingly clear: allowing bankruptcy judges to “cram down” mortgages would increase the cost of all mortgages and add an incentive for more people to declare bankruptcy.

The adverse effects of this legislation will extend beyond the small percentage of people it is intended to help. The increased risk in the housing market, and increased interest rates, will result in much larger down payments and cost first-time buyers and lower and middle-class families tens of thousands of dollars. The Mortgage Bankers Association predicts that “cram down” would increase interest rates from six percent to eight percent on a 30-year, fixed rate mortgage. For a \$300,000 loan for example, this would cost the borrower nearly \$5000 per year and over \$144,000 for the life of the loan. H.R. 1106 will encourage more homeowners to file bankruptcy as some homeowners, currently on the margin of bankruptcy but still making payments, could take advantage of “cram down” bankruptcy as opposed to seeking a loan modification with their lender. Is encouraging bankruptcies really a solution to our problems? For many filers it would only delay the pain of foreclosure. Just one-third of Chapter 13 filers actually complete the process, which is itself costly and time-consuming. If our goal is to unfreeze credit

and improve the economy, H.R. 1106 is the wrong prescription.

We can do better. We can craft solutions that give troubled home-owners a “time out” and help them catch up on payments without burdening taxpayers, overturning a bedrock provision of our bankruptcy code that has benefited 90 percent of Americans who do not have troubled mortgages. If this bill becomes law, new responsible homeowners will be forced to make higher mortgage payments each and every month for 30 years. That is a significant “tax” on responsible middle class families. Forcing responsible Americans to subsidize bad decisions by others may not meet the technical definition of a tax increase, but I believe whenever you take money out of one person's pocket and give it to someone else it is a tax.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chair, It can be easy to think that a neighbor's home troubles are no concern of ours. If we can still pay our mortgages, it's easy enough to shut our doors on their problems.

But the world doesn't work like that. Our prosperity is bound to theirs, in good times and bad. A single foreclosed home can threaten a neighborhood; a neighborhood of foreclosed homes can help bring down the economy of a city; and a nation full of foreclosures can expect economic turmoil, and frozen credit, and layoffs, and decreasing demand, and more layoffs. That is where we are today: a nation with 14 million families' mortgages underwater, and counting; a nation in which foreclosed homes can drive down the value of their neighbors' property by nearly 10 percent.

That's why this bill is so necessary. The Helping Families Save Their Homes Act puts into law some of the most important provisions of President Obama's homeowner stability plan. It makes it easier for lenders to renegotiate mortgages for families who are underwater, close to foreclosure, or nearing bankruptcy. And for families that are driven into bankruptcy by their home payments, this bill allows bankruptcy judges to modify the terms of their loans—a step that is free for taxpayers and could reduce foreclosures by 20 percent. Today, investors can restructure debt on their vacation homes; real estate speculators can do it for their property; corporations can do it for their private planes; and you can even do it if you own a boat. It is only fair that average Americans have the same right for the homes they live and raise their families in.

I also want to make very clear that this bill is not designed for those who bought bigger houses than they knew they could afford. It is made for those who acted responsibly but need this breathing room because of circumstances they could not control—circumstances like unemployment or the nationwide decline in home values.

Maybe someone listening in this chamber, or watching on TV, knows what it's like to lose a home. You know, in a way that I do not, just how wrenching it is to be forced to box up your things and turn over your key.

But this bill is not just about you—it is about all of us. As President Obama said this month, “In the end, all of us are paying a price for this home mortgage crisis. And all of us will pay an even steeper price if we allow this crisis to deepen.” The effects go far deeper than one family and one now-vacant house. They go to the health of an entire economy—to the jobs and livelihoods of people on the other side of the continent. They go to a crisis that will not end until this mortgage mess is cleaned up.

So for all of our sakes, we need to pass this bill and begin putting President Obama's plan into effect.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1106) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability:

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 1106: Helping Families Save Their Homes Act of 2009. I want to thank all of the members who worked tirelessly on this bill as well as the President for making this a priority in his plan to help families stay in their homes.

Our country is faced with enormous challenges and every community has felt the effect of this economic downturn. Digging ourselves out of the hole we have been left will not be easy and will require difficult choices.

The housing crisis is not only at the root of the economic crisis we currently face, but continues to be a problem for millions of families facing difficulties in paying their mortgages. In Connecticut there were over 25,000 foreclosure filings in 2008, which was an increase of 84 percent over the previous year. Already in January of this year there have been more than 1,600 foreclosure filings in the state, including 387 in Hartford County alone.

This bill will go a long way to decreasing foreclosures and keeping families in their homes. It helps provide opportunities for families to refinance or modify their mortgages and ensures fairness in our bankruptcy courts for homeowners who face this option as their last resort. By allowing bankruptcy judges to modify the terms of mortgage loans, we will give homeowners the same opportunity that others have to restructure their loans for vacation homes. The bill also contains fixes to the Hope for Homeowners program that will pro-

vide more incentives for servicers to refinance mortgage loans and reduce fees for participating in the program. Finally, by permanently increasing federally insured deposits from \$100,000 to \$250,000 we will help restore confidence in our financial system.

This recovery will require a number of steps and this legislation is the next step in getting America back on track. I again want to express my support for this bill and urge my colleagues to vote for its passage.

INTRODUCTION OF “CLEAN TEA”

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce “CLEAN TEA,” the Clean Low-Emissions Affordable New Transportation Equity Act, with my colleagues ELLEN TAUSCHER and STEVEN LATOURETT. This legislation recognizes that the United States cannot meet its climate change goals without addressing emissions from the transportation sector. Transportation is responsible for about one-third of greenhouse gas emissions; passenger automobiles and light trucks alone contribute 21 percent. The transportation sector must be responsible for a proportionate amount of the solution.

Since 1980, the number of miles Americans drive has grown three times faster than the U.S. population, and almost twice as fast as vehicle registrations. Although new vehicle technology and low carbon fuel can substantially reduce emissions from automobiles and light trucks, these gains are likely to be offset by continuing growth in vehicle miles traveled. It is critical that legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions also provides people with low-carbon transportation options through community design and transportation alternatives. Providing consumers with transportation options will also save them money and provide additional public health, environmental, economic, and quality of life benefits.

CLEAN TEA is predicated on the adoption of a comprehensive climate change bill that would generate revenue for the Federal government. Under CLEAN TEA, 10 percent of the funding generated through this legislation would be used to create a more efficient transportation system and lower greenhouse gas emissions through strategies such as funding new or expanded transit or passenger rail supporting development around transit stops, and making neighborhoods safer for bikes and pedestrians.

In order to be eligible for the funding authorized by this legislation, cities and state departments of transportation would have to review their transportation plans and determine how they could reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The bill then provides federal funding for

projects in those transportation plans to be distributed to states and localities based on the expected reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in each plan. States and cities with more ambitious plans would receive greater funding.

As we move forward to address climate change, I hope my colleagues will work with me to align our transportation and climate policy goals. By doing this, we can reduce our carbon footprint, improve our communities, save Americans money, and create a transportation system for the 21st century.

FEDERAL LIVING WAGE RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2009

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker. I rise today to announce the introduction of my bill, the Federal Living Wage Responsibility Act of 2009, legislation to mandate a livable wage for employees under Federal contracts and subcontracts.

The Economic Policy Institute estimates that, in fiscal year 2006, “over 406,000 federal contract workers earned less than \$9.91/hr,” the poverty threshold for a family of four. It is unacceptable that in a time of economic crisis, Congress is not doing all it can to ensure that hardworking Americans have the opportunity to keep themselves and their families out of poverty.

That is why I am re-introducing the Federal Living Wage Responsibility Act of 2009, which requires that employees of federal contracts or subcontracts of more than \$10,000 are paid wages in accordance with the Federal poverty level for a family of four as determined by the Department of Health and Human Services. This legislation also ensures that federal contract workers receive benefits such as health insurance, vacation and holiday pay, disability insurance, life insurance, and pensions.

While Congress took one step in the right direction with the passage of laws such as the Davis-Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act to help ensure that employees of federal contractors earn a decent wage, our work is not done. Thousands of federal contract workers still do not earn enough to support their families. These prevailing wage standards fall well below what is required for full-time federal contract workers to sustain a reasonable standard of living.

Madam Speaker, in these times of economic turmoil this Congress must guarantee that hardworking Americans will be able to support their families with a livable wage. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this timely and necessary legislation which would set a standard for decent wages.