

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE SWINNEY FAMILY AS BENTON COUNTY FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

HON. JOHN BOOZMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 29, 2010

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Swinney family, for the honor and recognition of being named the Benton County Family Farm of the Year.

For more than 60 years the Arkansas Farm Family of the Year Program has honored farm families all across the state for their outstanding work both on their farms and in their communities. Recognition from the program is a reflection of the contribution to agriculture at the community and state level and its implications for improved farm practices and management.

Kent Swinney, with the help of his wife Carol and their three children Troy, Dwayne and Brandon, run a soybean, green bean, cattle, and Bermuda hay farm in Gentry, Arkansas.

Mr. Swinney has devoted his life to farming, spending his childhood on the farm with his father and grandfather and I am pleased to see he is passing along his passion to future generations of Arkansas farmers.

Arkansas is proud of the Swinney family for their commitment to farming and their commitment to farming as a family. This honor reflects the family's dedication to farming and the importance of farming as Arkansas's number one industry. I wish them continued success in their future endeavors and look forward to the contributions they will offer in the future of Arkansas agriculture.

COMMERCE FOR DEFENDERS ACT OF 2010

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 29, 2010

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, today I rise on behalf of all of America's Veterans and proudly introduce the Commerce for Defenders Act of 2010—a bill to create a Veteran Owned Small Business Preference in the Surface Transportation authorization—SAFETEA-LU, and set the precedent for continuing this important preference in the upcoming authorization.

For more than two hundred years, brave Americans have answered the call to serve our Nation at home and abroad, and my fellow West Virginians have long been among the first to report for duty.

Our Nation's veterans are true American patriots. Theirs is a proud story of service, sacrifice, and uncommon acts of heroism. They make each of us so very proud.

Aristotle said, "Men acquire a particular quality by constantly acting a particular way

. . . you become just, by performing just actions . . . brave by performing brave actions."

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to, and have great respect and deep admiration for, the 23 million men and women across America, who wore a military uniform in service to these great United States.

Madam Speaker, for 34 years I have been privileged to represent the people of southern West Virginia, and it is with humble sincerity I say, our Nation's veterans are never far from my mind.

There are 170,783 Veterans in my State of West Virginia—51,500 in my Congressional District alone—and that number is growing every day.

I am disheartened that our Veterans—the Defenders of our Freedom and American Way of Life—have given so much to their fellow Americans; yet, they face many hardships in their return to civilian life.

In a Nation such as ours, it is a stunning reality that today our brothers and sisters who have served around the globe to preserve democracy and promote freedom, are struggling with life in their home towns. Our Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are currently faced with a 21 percent unemployment rate.

Creating a Veterans' preference in the Transportation sector is very simple. It seeks to give America's veterans an opportunity advantage in the contracting process for their service to our country—a means to attach importance and to acknowledge our fellow Americans who have put their life on the line to preserve our way of life.

The propensity of this bill is at the same enormous and reasonable.

The number of Veteran owned businesses available to contract in the transportation construction industry would be quite small in comparison to the potential \$500 billion authorization bill proposed by Chairman OBERSTAR. However, for Veterans who have returned home from deployment; who are trying to put their life and families back on track; who have been plunged into the extremely competitive marketplace—creating this preference is the very least we can do and will make a difference for many, many veterans.

There is an exponential effect created by this preference, as Veterans are known to hire other Veterans—spreading the potential benefit beyond prime contractors on to subcontractors and employees, as well as those who provide products and services to them—such as truck drivers, mechanics, surveyors and repair technicians, landscapers, bricklayers, carpenters, and concrete and masonry suppliers—and the list goes on.

The bill will not burden states with verification processes, as the Veterans Administration already has Veteran Owned Small Business registration process in place. The law that created this existing database requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make the database available to all federal departments and agencies and to notify each department and agency of the availability of the database. To ensure a Veteran Owned Small

Business is eligible a state would simply check that the business is registered with the Veterans Administration—saving time and money for all involved.

This bill does not interfere with Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) contracting goals currently enshrined in federal transportation law—in fact, it is my hope that the many women and minority veteran's small business owners will benefit from this opportunity. This Veterans preference would not create any new eligibility requirements for the DBE program and it would not infringe upon the importance that Congress has repeatedly placed on the DBE program.

Madam Speaker, from the battlefield to the marketplace, our veterans—America's patriots—exemplify sacrifice and commitment to duty.

I urge my colleagues to vote for The Commerce for Defenders Act of 2010—so that we may respectfully and gratefully fulfill our duty to support our Veterans—and, in one small part, to acknowledge the great sacrifice so many have so willingly made for all of us.

CALLING FOR RELEASE OF ISRAELI SOLDIER BY HAMAS

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2010

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1359, which calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Gilad Shalit and other Israeli soldiers who are being held illegally by terrorist organizations. On June 25, 2006, Hamas terrorists based in Gaza led an illegal raid into Israel, where they attacked a military post and killed two Israeli soldiers before kidnapping then-corporal Gilad Shalit. Since then, Hamas has held Mr. Shalit without access to medical treatment, legal counsel, or humanitarian organizations. For 4 years, Mr. Shalit has been kept from his family, which has had to watch helplessly as Hamas cynically exploited videos of their loved one.

As I have said many times before, only a just, permanent, and peaceful settlement between Israelis and Palestinians can ensure the security and welfare of both peoples. The way forward in the Middle East will require compromises by all parties, but certain things are nonnegotiable. Hamas must end terrorist activities, renounce violence, and recognize Israel. Human rights and international humanitarian law must be respected by all, and Hamas bears the responsibility to meet this standard by immediately and unconditionally releasing Gilad Shalit. I stand firmly with his family and all Israelis who continue to suffer until justice is done.

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

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