

program forces employers to be identification experts while allowing unscrupulous employers to hire illegal immigrants.

The 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act sought to improve reliability of the I-9 system by creating the Basic Pilot Program, now known as E-Verify, which allows employers, on a voluntary basis, to use an online system to verify the work authorization status of new employees by checking validity of the Social Security numbers with the Social Security Administration. The implementation of this program has been a step in the right direction. However, several studies have found that the E-Verify program is unable to detect identity fraud, allowing those with valid, but stolen documents, to secure employment.

H.R. 98 builds on the E-Verify program by creating an easy to use electronic verification system based on a secure, tamper-proof Social Security card, which employers can use to electronically verify the work authorization status of prospective employees. The new card includes a digitized photo of the cardholder, as well as an encrypted electronic signature strip, allowing employers to instantaneously verify a prospective employee's work authorization status with the Department of Homeland Security's Employment Eligibility Database, either through a toll-free number or electronic card-reader.

H.R. 98 also increases penalties for employers who hire illegal immigrants or fail to verify their employment eligibility by increasing fines to \$50,000 from \$2,000, applying jail sentences of up to 5 years per offense, and requiring the employer to pay for deportation. In addition, the bill adds 10,000 new DHS personnel whose sole responsibility will be to enforce employer compliance and prosecute those who illegally employ illegal immigrants.

Mr. Speaker, with newly improved document standards, employers will have a much higher degree of confidence in their hiring decisions. This will help to prevent the hiring of unauthorized workers and stop illegal immigration.

HONORING DANIEL FRANCIS
BURKE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Daniel Francis Burke. Daniel is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Daniel has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Daniel has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Daniel has earned the rank of Senior Patrol Leader. Daniel has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Daniel designed and constructed an open shelter for Jesse James Park in Kearney, Missouri, a task that included many long weekends this past fall.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Daniel Francis Burke for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARY TAX REDUCTION ACT AND THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S TAX ELIMINATION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce two pieces of legislation to reduce taxes on senior citizens. The first bill, the Social Security Beneficiary Tax Reduction Act, repeals the 1993 tax increase on Social Security benefits. Repealing this increase on Social Security benefits is a good first step toward reducing the burden imposed by the Federal Government on senior citizens. However, imposing any tax on Social Security benefits is unfair and illogical. This is why I am also introducing the Senior Citizens' Tax Elimination Act, which repeals all taxes on Social Security benefits.

Since Social Security benefits are financed with tax dollars, taxing these benefits is yet another example of double taxation. Furthermore, "taxing" benefits paid by the government is merely an accounting trick, a shell game which allows members of Congress to reduce benefits by subterfuge. This allows Congress to continue using the Social Security trust fund as a means of financing other government programs, and masks the true size of the federal deficit.

Instead of imposing ridiculous taxes on senior citizens, Congress should ensure the integrity of the Social Security trust fund by ending the practice of using trust fund monies for other programs. This is why I am also introducing the Social Security Preservation Act, which ensures that all money in the Social Security trust fund is spent solely on Social Security. At a time when Congress' inability to control spending continues to threaten the Social Security trust fund, the need for this legislation has never been greater. When the government taxes Americans to fund Social Security, it promises the American people that the money will be there for them when they retire. Congress has a moral obligation to keep that promise.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to help free senior citizens from oppressive taxation by supporting my Senior Citizens' Tax Elimination Act and my Social Security Beneficiary Tax Reduction Act. I also urge my colleagues to ensure that moneys from the Social Security trust fund are used solely for Social Security benefits and not wasted on frivolous government programs.

INTRODUCING THE CAGING PROHIBITION ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Caging Prohibition Act of 2011,

a much needed reform to our election system. I believe that we should continue to focus on improvements to our election system in this Congress leading up to the presidential cycle next year. As we begin to focus election fixes and greater voter protections, this legislation can make a critical contribution to such efforts. Prohibitions on voter caging will ensure that our democracy lives up to the belief that every eligible citizen is entitled to the right to vote.

Voter caging, though just recently given media attention, is a disenfranchisement tactic that has been around for over 50 years. This undemocratic tactic often involves sending mail to voters at the addresses at which they are registered to vote. Should such mail be returned as undeliverable or without a return receipt, voters' names are placed on a "caging list," that list then being used to challenge voters' eligibility.

Those suggesting that voter caging is necessary to weed out ineligible voters must recognize this practice is unreliable and dangerous for such purposes. Mail may be returned as undeliverable for any number of reasons unrelated to an individual's eligibility to vote. For example, mail is returned due to typos, transposed numbers, new street names, and improper deliveries.

Voters in my home state of Michigan have been subjected to voter caging controversies in the last two Presidential elections. In the 2008 Election, a voter caging strategy meant to politically capitalize on the subprime mortgage crisis was identified. Those voters whose homes had been subjected to foreclosure were targets for caging on the basis that they no longer resided at the addresses at which they registered to vote.

During the 2004 Election, challengers monitored every single one of Detroit's 254 polling stations. This strategy was consistent with a Michigan lawmaker's effort to "suppress the Detroit vote." It was widely accepted that this statement was synonymous with "suppress the Black vote," as Detroit is 83 percent African American.

Our most vulnerable voters—racial minorities, language minorities, low-income people, the homeless, and college students—always seem to be targeted for caging and other voter suppression campaigns. However, all voters are susceptible to voter intimidation and suppression. For example, during the 2004 election, Ohio and Florida caging lists included the names of soldiers whose mail had been returned as undeliverable because they were stationed overseas.

It is because no one is immune to caging and other disenfranchisement tactics, that I have introduced the Caging Prohibition Act. This bill is really quite simple, as it one, requires election officials to corroborate their caging documents with independent evidence before a voter can be deemed ineligible. And two, limits all other challenges that do not come from election officials to those based on personal, first-hand knowledge.

By eliminating caging tactics, we restore what has been missing from our elections—fairness, honesty, and integrity. I ask that my colleagues in the Congress join me in supporting the Caging Prohibition Act of 2011. Please stand with me in protecting the very core of our democracy.

HONORING ALAN ROBERT WILKIN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alan Robert Wilkin. Alan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alan has earned the rank of Assistant Patrol Leader. Alan has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alan helped record names and other information for Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Kearney, Missouri in an effort to help genealogists and locate one particular lost plot for the trustees.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alan Robert Wilkin for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN MEMORY OF DR. DEAN WYATT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding public servant, Dr. Dean Wyatt. For 18 years, Dr. Wyatt worked as a public health veterinarian with the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. At great risk to his own career, Dr. Wyatt distinguished himself as an advocate of improved federal oversight of food safety and humane handling rules at regulated slaughter plants. His tragic death from a brain tumor is a terrible loss to the country.

I had the honor of receiving Dr. Wyatt's testimony before the House Oversight Committee's Subcommittee on Domestic Policy in March of last year. He stepped forward to call attention to animal cruelties that he had observed at federally regulated slaughter facilities and to deep-seated problems in USDA's enforcement of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act.

Even after he was diagnosed with his fatal illness, Dr. Wyatt continued to advocate for reform. His proposal to establish an ombudsman at the agency, which USDA is now implementing, is just one of many ways he has made a lasting impact.

Dr. Wyatt's truth-telling did not make him popular with his agency superiors. Indeed, over the years he endured their disapproval and condemnation. Yet he spoke up: not just for animals but also for fellow inspectors and veterinarians in USDA. He spoke up for all of those who are dedicated to ensuring meaningful compliance with the law, over the resistance of corporate interests and, at times, the agency itself. He remained true to his mission

until his death. He will be deeply missed, and his spirit will live on as an inspiration to those whose lives he graced.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY PRESERVATION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to protect the integrity of the Social Security trust fund by introducing the Social Security Preservation Act. The Social Security Preservation Act is a rather simple bill which states that all monies raised by the Social Security trust fund will be spent in payments to beneficiaries, with excess receipts invested in interest-bearing certificates of deposit. This will help keep Social Security trust fund monies from being diverted to other programs, as well as allow the fund to grow by providing for investment in interest-bearing instruments.

The Social Security Preservation Act ensures that the government will keep its promises to America's seniors that taxes collected for Social Security will be used for Social Security. When the government taxes Americans to fund Social Security, it promises the American people that the money will be there for them when they retire. Congress has a moral obligation to keep that promise.

Everyone acknowledges that the federal deficits are unsustainable. Social Security reform is necessary to ensure the federal debt does not create a serious economic crisis that could devastate those, like Social Security recipients, living on fixed incomes. Preventing the use of Social Security trust fund monies for non-Social Security purposes is a necessary first step in reforming Social Security in a manner that does not hurt those currently relying on the system. I therefore call upon all my colleagues, to stand up for America's seniors and taxpayers by cosponsoring the Social Security Preservation Act.

VOTING OPPORTUNITY AND TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENT RIGHTS ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Voting Opportunity and Technology Enhancement Rights or VOTER Act of 2011. I introduce this legislation, more than 200 years after the founding of our democracy, because we have yet to realize a government that is truly representative of the principle, "of the people, by the people." Not until every eligible voter has the opportunity to cast a ballot and have that ballot counted, will we have a truly democratic government.

Though the 2010 elections did not present the widespread irregularities and improprieties that were witnessed during the 2000 and 2004 elections, it was still an election in which voter disenfranchisement was attempted and accomplished. Voters' names were still missing from voter rolls. Voter harassment and intimi-

dation complaints were still registered with Federal officials.

In fact, over the years, the methods that are used to disenfranchise voters have become more sophisticated as evidenced during the 2008 Election. For example, in my home state of Michigan, in the midst of the current subprime mortgage crisis, a strategy to challenge a voter's eligibility based on home foreclosure status was devised.

In Virginia, a flyer telling Democrats to vote on Wednesday, November 5, 2008, circulated. Similar tactics were present last fall, with complaints coming in from areas as diverse as Harris County, Texas, and even the state of Kansas.

We should recognize that anything short of a perfect election system is unacceptable and work on a bipartisan basis in seeking corrective action. To that end, I have introduced VOTER so that we may work towards a more perfect system, one that reflects legitimacy, integrity, and inclusivity. VOTER will protect and expand voting rights in Federal elections, as well as ensure the proper administration of Federal elections.

VOTER will: (1) provide for a uniform Federal write-in absentee ballot; (2) require states to provide for a verified audit trail; (3) count provisional ballots cast in the proper state; (4) properly allocate voting machines and poll workers; (5) provide for election day voter registration; (6) protect against improper purging of registration lists; (7) mandate early voting; (8) require verification and audit ability for punch cards; (9) simplify voter registration requirements; (10) allow voter identification by written affidavit; (11) provide for a study of nonpartisan election boards; (12) strengthen the EAC with funding and resources; (13) mandate the use of publicly available open source software; (14) restrict voting machine companies from engaging in political activities; (15) give greater deference to voter intent during recounts; (16) prohibit deceptive practices and intimidation; (17) prohibit caging and other questionable challenges; (18) restore voting rights to former felons; and (19) treat Election Day as a Federal holiday.

Some of these initiatives have already been implemented by states, the success of which was observed during the 2010 elections. There are 32 states that currently provide early voting, including Florida, a state that witnessed over 1 million voters turn out to the polls the weekend before the 2008 election. There are also 29 states that currently provide no-excuse absentee voting by mail.

Such practices were critical to managing an unprecedented voter turnout in the 2008 elections. More than 130 million people turned out to vote, the highest turnout in any presidential election. With this many longtime and new voters engaged in the 2008 election process, I suspect that voter participation will only increase in 2012.

As such, we must pledge to fight for election reform this Congress. The right to vote and to have that vote counted is one of our democracy's most fundamental principles. It is with VOTER that I intend to protect this fundamental principle, and I ask that my colleagues in this Congress join me in this fight for fair and just elections.