

HONORING THE GULLETT FAMILY

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 11, 2011

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following proclamation.

Whereas, Jim Gullett, Sr., was born in Camden, Alabama between 1850 and 1852 in slavery, his life has blessed us with descendants that have helped to shape our nation; and

Whereas, the Gullett Family has produced many well respected citizens and their patriarchs and patriarchs of the family are pillars of strength not only for their families, but for our nation as well; and

Whereas, in our beloved Fourth Congressional District of Georgia, we are honored to have many members of the Gullett family, including Mrs. Adrienne Clark one of our most beloved citizens in our District who resides in Lithonia, Georgia; and

Whereas, family is one of the most honored and cherished institutions in the world, we take pride in knowing that families such as the Gullett family have set aside this time to fellowship with each other, honor one another and to pass along history to each other by meeting at this year's family reunion in Lithonia, Georgia; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize the Gullett family in our District;

Now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR. do hereby proclaim Friday, July 15, 2011 as Gullett Family Reunion Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 15th day of July, 2011.

HONORING JAVIER COLON, WINNER OF THE FIRST SEASON OF "THE VOICE"

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 11, 2011

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with the greatest pride that I rise today to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Stratford, Connecticut's native son, Javier Colon, the winner of the first season of television's "The Voice." Javier has an extraordinary talent and I am honored to join his hometown community of Stratford in congratulating him on his success.

Those who knew Javier as he was growing up in Stratford knew that he was destined for success. As a student at Bunnell High School, he was known as a performer—acting in many school plays and standing out in the choir. He pursued his dream as a singer-songwriter, attending the Hart Music School in West Hartford, Connecticut and playing locally—solo at Starbucks in Bishop's Corner and fronting EmcQ at the Arch Street Tavern. He even self-produced an album last year. Javier took a risk when he auditioned for "The Voice"—taking time off from the job he was holding to support his family—but it was a risk he had to take to realize his dream.

In its first season "The Voice," the NBC vocal competition, invited talent from across the country to compete on live television for a

chance at a cash prize and recording contract. Javier was one of thousands who chose to audition and he battled his way through three additional stages of competition and in the end, his unique style and renditions of Cyndi Lauper's "Time After Time," Ben E. King's "Stand by Me," and Coldplay's "Fix You" won the hearts of the shows judges and the American public to become "America's Voice."

Throughout the competition, Javier said that his inspiration was his two girls—that he was doing it for them, so that they could have a better life. As they grow older, they will certainly be proud of all that he has achieved. Javier has made us all proud. In fact, in Connecticut, week after week, hundreds would gather in bars, restaurants, and living rooms to cheer him on. His dedication to his singing and his commitment to the hard work it takes to succeed has inspired countless people, not only in Connecticut, but across the country to pursue their own dreams. Today, the Stratford community will gather to welcome him home and wish him well as he enjoys this remarkable achievement.

I am honored to stand today to extend my sincere congratulations to Javier Colon, his parents, Migdalea and Pablo, as well as his wife, Maureen, and two daughters, Solana and Amaia. I can only imagine what a special time this must be for them and I wish them all the best for many more years of health, happiness, and success.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2219) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to this bill.

I thank the majority for allowing the House to work its will in a completely open fashion on this bill. It was a refreshing change. I only wish the outcome had been a bill that reflected better the international security and economic realities we are facing today.

To be sure, there are many things in this bill that I strongly support. The 1.6 percent pay increase for our troops is important and necessary. The additional \$1.5 billion for Guard and Reserve equipment modernization is badly needed. The \$2.3 billion for family support and advocacy programs will help military families cope while their loved ones are away and help our troops reintegrate when they come home. And the bill also includes a critical suicide prevention amendment I offered.

My amendment would give the Defense Department \$20 million to initiate suicide prevention and counseling calls to help prevent these reservists from taking their own lives, as Coleman Bean, my constituent, tragically did in September 2008. For reservists like Coleman Bean of East Brunswick, New Jersey—those in the IRR, Individual Mobilization Augmentees, and Inactive National Guard members—

there remains no dedicated suicide prevention programs to help them cope with the war-time experiences. These reservists need our help, and I'm pleased my amendment was accepted.

Unfortunately, the good provisions in this bill are vastly outweighed by the absolute failure of the majority to make the Pentagon subject to the same kind of budget reductions they are so eagerly imposing on every other federal agency.

Since the year began, we've heard constantly from the majority that our debt is the greatest threat to our national security. If they really believed that, they would have supported the \$70 billion in cuts to the budget that I voted for during the debate on this bill. Instead, the only true cut they supported to this bloated, \$650 billion defense budget is a \$125 million reduction in funding for military bands.

The majority's message is clear: we will continue down the path of trying to balance the budget on the backs of the poor, the disabled, school children, and seniors. The Pentagon budget—which now funds a weakly justified war in Libya, a continued occupation of Iraq, and a military quagmire in Afghanistan—remains as the great sacred cow in the federal budget. There is no greater example today of our upside-down priorities than this budget.

This bill will provide nearly \$13 billion for an Afghan security force that is riddled with corruption, Taliban sympathizers, and drug traffickers. The bill continues to fund our presence in Iraq—tens of thousands of American troops remain in that country, and as we've seen they remain targets, with still more killed and wounded this year.

So much of this bill continues to be devoted to spending tens of billions of dollars on weapons systems that were designed to meet a Soviet threat that vanished 20 years ago. This week, a colleague from Vermont, Mr. WELCH, offered an amendment to this bill that would have eliminated funding for a next-generation nuclear bomber, a bomber to replace the B-2. Why in the world do we need such a platform in the first place? It was not a B-2 bomber that killed Osama bin Laden, but a U.S. Special Operations Forces team working with our intelligence community that eliminated the al Qaeda leader. Buying new nuclear bombers would simply be a form of defense-sector corporate welfare to protect against a threat that does not exist. Yet Mr. WELCH's amendment was defeated, and so we will continue to fund the development of an airplane we don't need.

I offered an amendment with several of my colleagues that would have simply cut the rate of increase in Pentagon spending. Instead of allowing a \$17 billion increase over last year's Pentagon budget, it would cap the increase at \$8.5 billion without impacting military pay or benefits. That amendment was also defeated—and its defeat only proved what I suspected: the majority is not serious about reigning in government spending.

Most of the attention this week was directed toward spending more for the military than we even have, spending more than the rest of the world—all together—and more than we can afford, even as so many people are calling for austerity measures to cut college aid, bridges and trains, environmental protection, and even Medicare. Yet the majority did not hesitate to deny training to military chaplains for implementing the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", or to prevent the Defense Department from