

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

EMPOWERING PARENTS THROUGH QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2218) to amend the charter school program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2218, the Empowering Parents through Quality Charter Schools Act. Although this bill includes some modest improvements to charter school regulation over current laws, it still falls short of ensuring that charter schools are held to high standards for educational quality, accountability and accessibility for all students.

Charter school education currently lies at the center of a growing movement to challenge traditional notions of what public education means in America. Although it is important for students to have choice within the educational model, we cannot solely rely on charter schools and private for-profit companies to solve all of our educational challenges within our public school system. There is considerable research which documents mixed reviews of success among charter schools. In a national study conducted by Stanford University economist Margaret Raymond, she found that only 17 percent of charter schools were superior to the local public schools, 37 percent of charter schools received worse results than comparable neighborhood schools and 46 percent did about the same.

With more than 1.5 million students enrolled in charter schools that vary widely in quality, it is critical that we, as a nation, have protections in place that will ensure these students achieve educational success and this bill falls short of ensuring just that. We must enhance the focus on charter schools' and authorizers' accountability. We must enhance the ever so important role of parents and the community's input in the authorizing process. We must ensure that adequate educational resources play a critical role in improving achievement for all students. With this bill's lack of transparency and accountability requirements, guarantee to adequate resources and parental and community involvement we will only further exacerbate current resource and opportunity gaps in the American educational system.

I appreciate my colleague Rep. GEORGE MILLER's commitment to equality education in American and his hard work on this bill but I think is important for us to take a closer look at this bill's provisions just to ensure that every student receives a quality education that is transparent, holds its educators accountable and is most importantly equal.

9/11 COMMEMORATION CEREMONY REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY & BIKE TOUR

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2011

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, September 11, 2001, is a day forever etched into the memory of the American people. On that day 10 years ago, over 3,000 innocent people, including nine Texans, died during the attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and aboard Flight 93. We gather at the Farmers Branch Remembrance Service to honor both their memory and the sacrifices of their families. We also renew our commitment to honoring the sacrifice and service of the citizens who risked their lives to help all those impacted on that terrible day. Firefighters, police officers, and first responders saved thousands of victims, and nearly 350 rescue personnel gave their lives in the service of others. It is because of their bravery that many of us knew 9/11 would not be the downfall of our great nation, despite what those who attacked us intended.

While 9/11 is a day of great solemnity, it is also a moment of pride. Our reaction as a country to those events—both during the events and afterward—reveals much about us as a people. Our enemies thought they could break our spirit and crush our will, but they failed to realize our resolve and resilience. As President George Bush said only days later, “America today is on bended knee, in prayer for the people whose lives were lost here, for the workers who work here, for the families that mourn.” They sought to divide us, but they mistook the strength of our convictions for the inability to act and the wisdom of liberty for frailty of arms. And they certainly failed to understand the breadth of our unity and the depth of our commitment to freedom both here and around the world.

As we look back on the 10 years since the attacks, we are reminded that the United States still faces enemies who spread fear and hate through terrorism and brutality. Congress, the Presidency, and the Federal Government have an obligation and duty to protect our nation. We have made great strides since that terrible day, but there is still much to be done. “Stars and Spokes” is a terrific reminder of the resilience of our nation and the ability of the American people to put our differences aside for the sake of our country men and women.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE FOR CHIEF PETTY OFFICER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL NICHOLAS HEATH NULL

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2011

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Petty Officer Explosive Ordnance Disposal Nicholas Heath Null who died August 6th in Wardak Province, Afghanistan. Chief Null was a patriot and a hero who made the ultimate sacrifice ensuring the security of our nation. He will be greatly missed.

Chief Null was a highly decorated combat veteran with numerous awards, including two Bronze Star Medals with Valor, including one for extraordinary heroism, Purple Heart Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals with Valor, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Valor, two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, two Combat Action Ribbons, Presidential Unit Citation, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals, two Iraqi Campaign Medals, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and numerous other personal and unit decorations.

Chief Null is survived by his loving family, friends, and teammates.

His nation owes Chief Null an enormous debt of gratitude. We are honored to have had such an exemplary American fighting for his country.

I wish to extend my condolences to Chief Null's family, friends, and teammates and hope they continue to find solace in his lasting impact on his grateful nation. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF S&C ELECTRIC COMPANY

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2011

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to S&C Electric Company, an exemplary business and essential community partner, which will be celebrating 100 years of service on September 25.

In 1909, after a dangerous fire at Commonwealth Edison's Chicago Fisk Generating Station, the utility asked Edmond Schweitzer and Nicholas Conrad to create a safer electric switch. In 1911, the men invented the Liquid Power Fuse and founded Schweitzer & Conrad, kicking off a century of job creation and technological innovation.

Today S&C, under the direction of C.E.O. John Estey, is a leader in smart energy solutions for our increasingly complex electric grid.

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

The company has pioneered electric power switching technologies that manage consumer demand aberrations as a result of plug-in vehicles, address peak energy crunches, and integrate clean and renewable energy into utility companies' existing electrical framework. Its commitment to quality has established the company as the industry leader in long-term value. And its commitment to its employees, including a benefits package that provides tuition reimbursement, has kept 350 employees at the company for over 25 years each. These traits will ensure that S&C remains a leader in electric power solutions for the next century.

The next century will compel our country to conserve precious energy resources, create new technologies to enhance efficiency, and incorporate clean energy alternatives. Companies like S&C will be instrumental in that process and will enable the United States to lead the world in energy innovation.

I am proud to count S&C among the companies in my district and its employees among my constituents. I congratulate them on this major milestone, and I look forward to their continued success in the 100 years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ATANACIO
GARCIA OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2011

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a truly amazing citizen of our country, Mr. Atanacio Garcia of San Antonio, Texas.

Mr. Garcia has dedicated his entire life to serving the United States of America. At the age of 22, he enlisted in the military and served 8 years, including a stint in Korea and Germany. Upon his discharge, Mr. Garcia returned to Texas and joined the U.S. Postal Service. In addition to working for the Postal Service for 24 years, Mr. Garcia also served in the Texas Air National Guard from March 14, 1963–March 13, 1982.

Since his retirement in 1984, Mr. Garcia has remained steadfast in his commitment to civic duty and civic responsibility, and he has continuously worked to help the people of San Antonio. Mr. Garcia worked to help bring the first public pool to San Antonio's Westside neighborhood, and he has been a constant figure at neighborhood events and local community service projects.

Even after all of these incredible achievements and accomplishments, Mr. Garcia has still felt the need to do even more for his country. Concerned about America's growing debt, he decided to take matters into his own hands. Starting in 2009, Mr. Garcia made a pledge to send \$50 every month to the U.S. Treasury's Bureau of Public Debt in order to pay down our national debt. In order to maintain his monthly pledge, Mr. Garcia uses money he makes from selling aluminum cans that he collects in his neighborhood.

Obviously, we cannot all have the sense of public service and civic duty of Mr. Atanacio Garcia, but it is my hope that we can all strive to be a little more like Mr. Garcia. If lawmakers and corporations were able to embody just a fraction of his willingness to solve problems by putting America first, I do not believe

that our country would have the problems that it does.

I want to thank Mr. Garcia for his tireless efforts and dedication to his community and to his country. He is a pillar of the San Antonio community, and an example for citizens across the country. It is truly an honor to represent constituents, such as Mr. Atanacio Garcia, in the U.S. Congress, and again, I would like to ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing this incredible public servant and citizen of the United States of America.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FOREIGN
SERVICE LINE OF DUTY DEATH
GRATUITY ACT OF 2011

HON. ALLEN B. WEST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2011

Mr. WEST. Mr. Speaker, today I rise, with my colleague Congressman BENNIE THOMPSON, to introduce the Foreign Service Line of Duty Death Gratuity Act.

As our nation approaches the 10th Anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11th, it is important to acknowledge that the attacks in New York and Washington, DC, were not the first shots fired in this war, but rather just an escalation of previous attacks against the United States.

Over the course of the upcoming weekend, Americans will reflect on the events of 10 years ago. Where were they on that terrible day? What were they doing when the towers fell and when the Pentagon was hit? How did they react when it became apparent that it was a terrorist attack on our country?

The events of that day have guided our Federal Government's approach, and indeed our society's approach, to preventing future attacks in many different ways.

However, there is another significant date—a date that may be less familiar to many Americans. That date is August 7, 1998. I know that for many Americans, if not most, it is difficult to recall what they were doing or where they were that day.

For the Department of State, and for many Foreign Service Officers and members of the State Department family, that date is a defining moment in each of their lives.

On the afternoon of August 7, 1998, over 8,000 miles from Capitol Hill on the continent of Africa, Al Qaeda terrorists set off two simultaneous truck bombs at the entrances to our embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dares Salaam, Tanzania.

When the smoke finally cleared, 300 people were dead. Twelve Americans and 40 citizens of Kenya and Tanzania who were working for the United States Government were among those killed. More than 5,000 were injured, and two United States embassies were destroyed.

Although the attacks were directed at American facilities, the vast majority of casualties were local citizens.

Fifteen years earlier, in 1983, a suicide bomber attacked the United States Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon. In that tragedy, sixty people died—mostly embassy staff members and U.S. service members. At that time, it was the deadliest attack on a U.S. diplomatic mission, and is considered by some to mark the begin-

ning of attacks by Islamist extremist groups on the United States.

After the Beirut attack, a Commission was set up under the leadership of former Navy Admiral Bobby Inman. Recommendations were made, funding was provided, and the State Department was charged to replace 77 embassies and consulates that failed to meet basic security standards.

The Commission stated that “a large number of facilities around the world, which once may have represented the optimal site for the conduct of American diplomacy, [should] be replaced by more physically secure sites and buildings. The Panel believe[s] that it [is] essential that a substantial relocation and building program be initiated and carried out with dispatch.” Despite this recommendation from the Inman Commission, a lack of appropriate sites and a lack of funding resulted in the Department completing only 22 of the planned Inman embassies.

By the time of the East African bombings, the Department had only one new embassy under construction. After the 1998 East African attacks, another Commission was set up, again under the leadership of retired Navy Admiral William Crowe. Once again recommendations were made, funding was provided, and the State Department was charged to replace 187 aging and unsecure embassies. The State Department worked closely with the Office of Management and Budget and the United States Congress to ensure that a funding commitment was put in place. In response, Congress passed the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999.

Over the last 13 years, the Department of State's Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations has completed, or has under construction, more than 100 facilities around the globe. Approximately 25,000 federal employees have moved into safer, more secure, and functional facilities overseas. With this latest building program, the State Department has moved one-quarter of all U.S. Government overseas employees into new facilities.

Since the East African bombings, American diplomatic facilities have been attacked over 140 times. Recently, attacks in Belgrade, Serbia; Sanaa, Yemen; Nuevo Laredo, Mexico and many others have been covered on the news. When they happen, these events are breaking news stories, but are often quickly forgotten. The State Department has been fortunate in each of these attacks that the perpetrators of the violence have never breached the hard line of the embassy building.

While the State Department continues to build secure facilities, the 13 years since the East Africa bombings have seen the world become more dangerous. The goal of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings is to construct facilities that provide American diplomats with safe and functional facilities where they can advance foreign policy, and ultimately make the world better, safer and more secure. Until that day comes, however, these Federal employees who bravely serve our nation continue to be at risk of terrorist attack.

Many of the Foreign Service Officers who work in United States diplomatic platforms serve alongside and face the same hazards and risks as our military personnel and intelligence officers.

As Foreign Service employees engage more visibly in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is important