

Liberia, Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, for recently being awarded the Noble Peace Prize for 2011. She was given the award in conjunction with peace activist Leymah Gbowee and pro-democracy campaigner Tawakkol Karman. The trio was recognized for their nonviolent role in promoting peace, democracy, and gender equality.

In typical fashion, President Sirleaf gave credit to the Liberian people, "For we are now going into our ninth year of peace and every Liberian has contributed to it. We particularly give this credit to Liberian women, who have consistently led the struggle for peace, even under conditions of neglect."

South Carolina has a special relationship with Liberia many founders of the Republic of Liberia having a South Carolina heritage. I know firsthand the mutual affection of the people of our two countries in that I was present for the re-opening of the AME University in Monrovia where my constituent African Methodist Episcopal Bishop David Daniels of West Columbia, presided with Pastor Ronnie Brailsford of Bethel AIVIE, Columbia, SC. Appropriately Bishop Daniels is the Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina and Liberia.

Her leadership has proven instrumental in restoring democracy and lasting peace in Liberia which had been devastated by Civil War. President George W. Bush was effective in demanding abdication by the murderous dictator Charles Taylor.

TO HONOR ERIC STRANSKY FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AND HIS MILITARY SERVICE

### HON. STEVEN C. LATOURETTE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2011

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Eric Stransky, who recently retired after 35 years with the Social Security Administration, with 28 of those years in management.

Stransky has been a tenacious advocate for my constituents in need of help from the Painesville, OH, Social Security office, and has been a trusted and reliable source who has worked closely with my caseworkers to get problems resolved. He is a model employee and his departure will leave Social Security with very big shoes to fill.

A graduate of John Carroll University, Stransky has been lauded for his work at the SSA, and received a Regional Commissioner Citation for leading a workgroup that resolved over 5,000 overpayments in six weeks. He's been a Supervisor at many SSA locations in Ohio—Marietta, Athens, Painesville, Cleveland East and University Circle Area. In 1998, Stransky served as the Area System Coordinator ensuring a smooth transition for all employees in Northern Ohio to individual desktop system access.

Stransky managed the local Euclid office for two years, Warrensville Heights for three years, and spent eight years working just a few blocks from my district office in Painesville while juggling a two-year stint in the U.S. Army as a Senior Joint Doctrine Developer at the Joint and Allied Doctrine Division, Army Capabilities Integration Center in Ft. Monroe, VA.

Retired Lt. Col. Eric Stransky served in the US Army Reserve for more than 29 years. He attended the following Military Schools: Armor Officer Basic; Junior Officer Preventive Maintenance Course; Armor Officer Professional Development Course; OPSEC Course; Special Warfare Center and School, PSYOP Officer Course; Armor Officer Advance Course; United States Army Command & General Staff College; United Kingdom PSYOP Officer Course; Physical Security Course; Individual Terrorism Awareness; Logistics Managers Course; Joint PSYOP Course; Joint Planning Orientation Course; Joint PSYOP Staff Planning Course; Faculty Development Phase 1 Course and Commanders Safety Course. In June 1995, then a Major, he was Chief of Psychological Operations at a United Nations Mission in Haiti.

Stransky commissioned in the Army Reserve as a Second Lt. in July 1978 and continued to move up through the ranks, ultimately promoted to Lt. Col. in April 2000. He retired in August 2006, but remains actively involved with the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Catholic War Veterans.

Stransky has received the following Military honors: Legion of Merit; Army Meritorious Service Medal (3); Army Commendation Medal (2); Joint Service Achievement Medal; Army Achievement Medal; Army Reserve Achievement Medal (7); National Defense Service Medal w/star; Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Armed Forces Service Medal; Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal; Armed Forces Reserve Medal (with silver hour glass and M(2) device); Reserve Component ODT Ribbon (6) and United Nations Mission in Haiti Medal.

Stransky has a great wit and a tremendous work ethic, and clearly can juggle many tasks at once with little effort. His military service has provided him with tremendous discipline and his attention to detail and process has catapulted the various Social Security offices he's managed into well-oiled, highly efficient, responsive and successful offices where both the employees and constituents are well served. He's a motivator who gets results.

With his remarkable career and his decades of service to our country, you might suspect that Eric Stransky is an Eagle Scout as well. And alas, he is.

It's been an honor and a privilege for me and my staff to work with a man whose goal in life is to help others, and it's a tough task to show him an appropriate level of gratitude. I'm sorry to see him go because he was one of a kind. He's served our nation and those in need with heart and purpose, and I wish him and his loving family all the best. Please enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF RAILROAD REHABILITATION & IMPROVEMENT FINANCING (RIFF) LEGISLATION

### HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2011

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce legislation that makes significant improvements to the Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing Program (RRIF). The RRIF program can help

railroads, shippers, and states meet their rail infrastructure investment needs. But we are not taking full advantage of the program.

I meet with railroads and others that tell me—time and again—how difficult the application process is to navigate; how time consuming it is; how expensive and cumbersome it is, how they can't use studies from other DOT agencies; and, in the end, many of them tell me: It's just not worth it! Well we need to do better.

The draft Surface Transportation Authorization Act of 2009 made significant changes to the RRIF program, which I proposed. The bill authorized the Secretary to: (1) reduce the interest to be paid on direct loans provided to railroads, State and local governments, and eligible entities for the sole purpose of installing positive train control (PTC) systems; (2) allow applicants to use private insurance, including bond insurance, in lieu of a credit risk premium; and (3) allow applicants to pay the credit risk premium over the life of the loan. The draft bill also authorized appropriations to assist the Secretary in reducing the interest rates for loans used for installing PTC.

IN RECOGNITION OF TRAVIS CREDIT UNION ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2011

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, Representatives GEORGE MILLER and I rise today in honor of Travis Credit Union, who has served Solano County and its surrounding communities for 60 years. Originally opening as the Travis Air Force Base Federal Credit Union in the autumn of 1951, Travis Credit Union has grown to be the 13th largest credit union in California, and with \$1.8 billion in assets, among the top 100 in the country.

To the charter members of Travis Air Force Base Federal Credit Union, the cost of living in 1951 was likely a major reason they decided to create their own financial alternative to banks that made it easier for them to borrow and save money. When the credit union first opened, it was in a makeshift base office and served only military and civilian personnel at the base.

In December of 1951, Travis Air Force Base Federal Credit Union had 68 members and \$2,015 in deposits. In 1954, the credit union made its first house trailer loan and then moved into the Passenger Terminal Building in April of 1955. At the end of 1961 TAFB FCU had 5,0432 members and \$1.39 million in deposits. Membership was expanded to include military and U.S.-sponsored civilian personnel stationed overseas in 1964 and in 1965 the Executive Committee was created establishing a president, vice president, treasurer and secretary.

The Travis Air Force Base Federal Credit Union changed its name to Travis Federal Credit Union in 1974 and in 1977 construction of the first off-base branch in Fairfield was completed. Today, the credit union has 22 branches located throughout the region in the cities of Fairfield, Vacaville, Dixon, Suisun City, Benicia, Vallejo, Davis, Woodland, Napa, Concord, Antioch, Clayton, Merced and