

Marie and Fred have been outstanding community employment partners, and I am honored to be their representative in the 8th District of Pennsylvania.

It is a pleasure to honor First Savings Bank of Perkasio for their commitment to the Wellspring Clubhouse and its mission of providing hope and opportunities for people with mental illness. Thank you once again for all that you do for the Bucks County community.

WASHINGTON POST ADMITS
ERRORS IN KOCH STORY

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Washington Post recently published a story about alleged questionable business practices by Koch subsidiaries dating back to the 1990s. The Post received criticism for the unbalanced and incomplete story on Koch Industries.

Patrick B. Pexton, Washington Post Ombudsman, stated "I think The Post erred in republishing this story, or at least in the way it did. And when the Kochs complained to The Post after publication, The Post's response wasn't handled well."

In addition, the Ombudsman goes on to state, ". . . I think the story lacked context, was tendentious and was unfair in not reporting some of the exculpatory and contextual information . . . I think newspapers should always be provocative. But they should also be fair and provide context . . . The Post could have included a sidebar summarizing and linking to the rebuttals. It could have called Koch directly—it didn't—and put its comments in the sidebar."

I hope that the Washington Post will be more thorough and accurate in its reporting in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE
CLEVELAND MEDIATION CENTER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Cleveland Mediation Center as it celebrates its 30th anniversary. The Mediation Center has provided an essential forum for dialogue and communication which has fostered cooperation and peace within the community. It has proven especially valuable for the city's youth, who often lack the voice to raise their concerns about problems which directly affect them.

The Center began as the Community Youth Mediation program in 1981. Focusing on the Near West Side community of Cleveland, this organization became the first grass-roots youth oriented mediation program in the country. The Center provided guidance to thousands of individuals and helped to address issues of truancy, school violence, and cases of abuse and neglect. Two of the programs developed by the Center would go on to be used by both the Juvenile Court and Cleveland Public Schools.

Following these successes, the Center was utilized in engaging the city at large. By 1992, it had expanded its youth centered approach to include issues such as neighbor to neighbor mediation and training. Homelessness has also been one of the Center's major concerns, particularly in addressing discrepancies between the city's homeless population and services provided by city agencies. Today, the Cleveland Mediation Center continues their mission of promoting constructive conflict resolution, especially among youth, and strengthening community ties with an emphasis on mediation and mediation training.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the Cleveland Mediation Center in celebrating their important role as facilitators within their communities and enabling fellow citizens to work through their conflicts in peaceful and constructive ways.

COAST GUARD AND MARITIME
TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2838) to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2012 through 2015, and for other purposes:

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chair, I rise today to support H.R. 2838, the "Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2011." This legislation authorizes funding for the Coast Guard through fiscal year 2014 and authorizes service strength of 47,000 active duty personnel.

As a Senior Member on the Committee on Homeland Security and the Border and Maritime Security Subcommittee, I understand the importance of protecting our maritime borders. In our post 9/11 climate, homeland security continues to be a top priority for our nation.

In 1787, Alexander Hamilton, in Federalist Paper Number 12 laid the foundation for the modern Coast Guard when he noted that "[a] few armed vessels, judiciously stationed at the entrances of our ports, might at a small expense, be made useful sentinels of our laws."

I believe protecting our country by air, land, and sea is critical to our national security interests. As Coast Guard is beneficial to our maritime interests, and consequently, our national security it is imperative that we provide the Coast Guard with the funding they need.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001 the focus of many federal agencies shifted to include an increased emphasis on Homeland Security. Under the Homeland Security Act of 2002, a number of security missions were assigned to the Coast Guard. Without question the first mission of our Coast Guard has been to protect our ports, waterways and to focus on coastal security. They have completed this mission with honor for centuries.

Across the United States there are currently more than 350 major ports of which 23 are located in my home state of Texas.

I am honored to represent the 18th Congressional District which includes the Port of Houston, one of our nation's busiest ports.

More than 220 million tons of cargo moved through the Port of Houston in 2010 and it has been ranked as first in foreign waterborne tonnage for the 15th consecutive year.

The port links Houston with over 1,000 ports located in 203 countries, and provides 785,000 jobs throughout the state of Texas. Maritime ports are major centers of trade, commerce, and travel along our nation's coastline. All of these ports are protected by the Coast Guard.

As a Representative from Texas, a border state, I am extremely concerned with curtailing the flow of illegal drugs entering into the United States. The Coast Guard is the lead federal agency for maritime drug interdiction.

Houston has been classified by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) as a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, and in a 2009 report, the ONDCP expressed concern that "the sheer volume of maritime traffic and foreign cargo that passes through the port offers another avenue for drug smuggling."

The Coast Guard is responsible for and has coordinated with other federal, state, and local agencies and countries within the region to disrupt and deter the flow of illegal drugs into Houston and other ports. This coordinated effort has resulted in a decrease in the supply of illicit substances being transported all over the country.

The Coast Guard protects the interests of American citizens and American commerce abroad. Last year, 73.2 million tons of exports left the Port of Houston to be sold to countries around the world. These exports represented \$70.8 billion dollars, and countless American jobs.

The international counter—piracy efforts of the Coast Guard focus on preventing attacks of piracy that threaten American commercial vessels and cargo. The Coast Guard also performs vital counter terrorism measures in ports abroad to ensure the safety of Americans across the globe.

In addition, in Houston the Coast Guard routinely conducts integrated operations with city, county, state and Federal Law Enforcement partners. The joint agency Houston Area Maritime Operations Center is a prime example of the type of coordination efforts directed under a recent Maritime Operations Coordination Plan signed by the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The Port of Houston as one of the world's busiest ports is a tremendous responsibility which has been smoothly operated by the Coast Guard. In terms of maritime traffic and cargo, the Port of Houston ranks first in the nation for number of ship arrivals and second in total cargo tonnage. Houston handles over 50 percent of all containerized cargo arriving at Gulf of Mexico ports.

Houston is the Energy capitol of the United States for a reason, more than 50 percent of the gasoline used in the United States is refined in this area. With more than 100 petrochemical waterfront facilities, Houston has the second largest such complex in the world. Major corporations such as Exxon-Mobil, Shell, Saudi ARAMCO, Stolt Nielson, Odffell USA Inc., Sea River and Kirby Marine have national or international headquarters in Houston.

These operations typically involve the Harris County Sheriff's Office and local city Police

Department marine divisions as well as CBP, ICE, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and other Federal partners. Efforts are underway with The Coast Guard's processes with neighboring sectors to align and streamline their operations across all jurisdictional boundaries. They need funding to continue to serve our country.

The Coast Guard relies on their port partners to act as both their eyes and ears on the water. With an average of 350 daily tow movements in the Houston Ship Channel and more than 100 waterfront facilities with a vigilant security presence, marine industry stakeholders are well positioned to recognize when things are out of the ordinary and serve as a valuable resource by diligently reporting breaches of security and suspicious activity. We also receive reports on fraudulent use of the Transportation Worker Identification Card, and work closely with our local enforcement and legal agencies such as the Harris County District Attorney to ensure these cases are prosecuted.

In recognition of the significance of Houston's shipping activity, the State of Texas formally established the Houston Ship Channel Security District (HSCSD) in 2010.

The HSCSD represents a unique public-private partnership formed to improve security and safety for facilities, employees and communities surrounding the Houston Ship Channel. The Coast Guard played an instrumental role in the formation of the HSCSD, and continues to work closely with the HSCSD to ensure alignment of priorities and unity of effort. As Sector Commander, I am a member of the HSCSD Advisory Council and Sector Port Security specialists attend HSCSD board meetings. The district provides oversight of comprehensive and cost-effective security solutions, leveraging more than \$30 million in Federal Port Security grants along with \$4 million in annual member assessments to install technology and security infrastructure and provide funds for specific security projects, maintenance and operational services.

The Port of Houston accommodates a large number of tankers carrying crude oil, refined products and chemical cargoes. With approximately 9,600 deep draft ship arrivals each year, the Coast Guard maintains a very extensive Port State Control program in the Houston-Galveston area. The Port State Control program ensures the safe carriage of hazardous materials in bulk. Because over 90 percent of cargo bound for the United States is carried by foreign-flagged ships, this national program prevents operation of substandard foreign ships in U.S. waters.

The Sector also makes excellent use of its robust Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). The VTS's primary role is facilitating safe vessel transits in the waterways and ports along the Houston Ship Channel. The VTS cameras, Automatic Identification System (AIS) feeds, remote radar observation capability, and radio communications, also provide an additional layer of security. In addition to the VTS resources in the Houston Ship Channel, Sector Houston-Galveston has access to feeds from three AIS receivers mounted on offshore oil platforms, which provide heightened awareness of activities in the maritime domain.

With a homeland security mission of this magnitude, it is essential that the Coast Guard be fully funded. This bill will authorize \$8.49

billion dollars in 2012, \$8.6 billion dollars in 2013, and \$8.7 billion in 2014. It is certainly the duty of this Congress and the Administration to ensure the brave men and women who serve in the Coast Guard have the resources necessary to perform the wide range of duties assigned to them.

This measure contains a private-sector mandate as defined in Unfunded Mandate Reform Act (UMRA). The bill would require operators to locate a standby vessel within 3 nautical miles of offshore oil and gas facilities when certain activities are being performed and within 12 nautical miles of facilities at all other times. The cost of that mandate would depend on several factors. The bill would allow operators to share one standby vessel among multiple facilities and to use standby vessels for other purposes.

For operators that can use those measures, the cost of the mandate would tend to be lower. At the same time, the bill would authorize the Coast Guard to require standby vessels to be located closer than 3 or 12 nautical miles to offshore facilities if necessary to address delays caused by weather or other conditions. Reducing the minimum distance from facilities would increase the number of vessels necessary for compliance and increase the cost of the mandate for some operators. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the aggregate cost of the mandate would probably exceed the annual threshold established in UMRA for private-sector mandates (\$142 million in 2011, adjusted annually for inflation).

However, I do have certain reservations about some of the provisions in this legislation. At the request of President Obama's Administration, Congress has appropriated funding to reactivate the USGC *Polar Star*, a heavy icebreaking vessel. The ship is to be reactivated by December 2012 for 7 to 10 years of service. The *Polar Star* is deployed to assist researchers throughout the Polar Regions, and is essential to United States icebreaking capabilities. Ice breaking vessels create pathways through which supply ships can travel, facilitating important research. In its current form, the bill decommissions the *Polar Star* within 3 years, creating a gap in the nation's icebreaking abilities.

As a senior Member on the Homeland Security Committee, I have a deep commitment to creating a stronger and more secure America. I have worked with my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to pass legislation that ensures that our nation is receiving the security that our citizens deserve. As the potential threats and vulnerabilities along our coast line may always exist. We rely upon Coast Guard and their active involvement with hundreds of partners who are directly involved with or impacted by the maritime industry in the Houston-Galveston area of responsibility, this Sector is committed to deterring incidents before they happen and is well-prepared to respond to them should they occur. The Coast Guard is vital to the protection of our national security.

Both sides of the aisle have a strong respect for the Coast Guard as well as for the men and women who work on manned stations off of our shores. I understand that Representative MICA has agreed to honor the purpose of an amendment offered by Representative OLSON that would have require the Com-mandant of the Coast Guard in consultation

with appropriate representatives of industry to conduct a feasibility study to determine the capability, cost, and benefits of requiring the owner or operator of a manned facility, installation, unit, or vessel to locate a standby vessel nearby. I would have supported this amendment because although a properly designed and equipped standby vessel in the immediate vicinity of manned outer continental shelf facilities may, in some cases, improve safety on the outer continental shelf.

In the event of a major casualty to an offshore installation, the immediate presence of a properly designed and equipped standby vessel, manned by a specially trained crew, might in some cases increase the chances of survival of the installation's crew members. We must not, however, forget the fact that historically the main cause of rig and platform abandonment has been due to severe weather. Unless these standby vessels are designed to withstand those severe conditions, requiring them to remain on scene could place the vessels and their crews in jeopardy. In addition, it is severely risky to board a standby vessel in severe weather conditions. For these reasons I would support a feasibility study to determine the effectiveness of using standby vessels for manned stations.

In addition, I support the amendment offered by Representative THOMPSON that would add a new section to the end of Title II in the bill to open admissions to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy to eligible candidates nominated by Congress.

Specifically, the amendment would require the U.S. Coast Guard to ensure that, beginning in academic year 2014, half of the incoming class is composed of eligible candidates nominated by the Vice President or, if there is no Vice President, by the President pro tempore of the Senate; Senators; Representatives; and Delegates to the House of Representatives. This will help to ensure that the Coast Guard has an even more diverse pool of candidate from across the United States.

The Coast Guard is proud of that legacy and their role in our national strategy is vital to keep our homeland secure. The safety and security of our nations and its citizens must be our highest priority, despite difficult economic circumstances. We need to make sure the Coast Guard is fully funded, and have the resources they need.

THANKING KEITH OLSEN ON HIS RETIREMENT AS PRESIDENT OF THE NEBRASKA FARM BUREAU

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank Keith Olsen for the contributions he has made to both Nebraskan and American agriculture during his tenure with the Nebraska Farm Bureau.

Keith, born in Imperial, Nebraska, started his ag work back in high school—getting active with the Future Farmers of America. Now, decades later, he is well-known by his fellow ag producers for serving the Nebraskan ag community with a spirit and verve second to none, and his career shows this.

Since 1992, Keith has served on the Nebraska Farm Bureau Board of Directors. In