

life crosses the path of one. I have had that good fortune in getting to know Ben Cole of Savannah.

Ben runs the Chain Baseball Academy. For nearly two decades, he had trained thousands of boys in the competitive art of "America's Favorite Pastime." Ben takes youngsters of various walks of life and teaches them the fundamentals of hitting, pitching, and catching. Many go on to become star high school, college, and professional baseball players. It is no surprise that Chain Baseball has produced over 300 college level athletes and 44 professional, including two World Series pitchers!

However it is not just about baseball. It's about character building, teamwork, and excelling on and off the field. Ben's most important lesson for the parents is that if the kid doesn't want to be a baseball player: Don't force him. In today's society, sometimes parents can push their children too much. That takes the fun out of it for them and can hurt their confidence. Instead, parents should let them enjoy being kids. If they want to play baseball, fine, and if they don't, that's fine too. They have to want it for themselves, not their Moms and Dads.

Because of the amount of traveling required, playing baseball can be expensive. Not all families can afford the time and money involved. That's why Ben and Chain owner Buddy Meyer work hard to find financial aid for kids in need. The term "elite athlete" doesn't mean financially elite. They want the door to be open to all.

Ben also works patiently with Moms and Dads. He has a special place for women whose husbands are deployed. Chain Academy is less than a mile from Hunter Army Airfield, home of the 3rd ID. Often, Moms walk through the door with a boy whose dad is in Afghanistan or Iraq. Mom doesn't know much about baseball, but she's come to the right place. Ben makes sure her son, who has often just moved to town, is treated like family.

Finally, Ben leads by example. At 81 years old, he doesn't sit at the desk barking out instructions. He gets in the cage, picks up a bat, and shows his students how to swing, catch, or throw. And when the time allows, he puts on a batter's helmet and takes a few swings himself. With his perfect form he drives the ball hard and strong, proving to all he knows what he's doing.

Ben likes the great athlete but no more than the earnest athlete. No matter what the age, if a kid tries his best, Ben's there to help make him a better player. I can attest to that. I've seen him patiently spend hours coaching a fifty-six-year-old congressman. Even if there's little improvement, year by year, he's ready to help! His enthusiasm is contagious.

Ben's an optimist. He loves his country, his family, his favorite sport of baseball and the kids of all ages who play it. Star athletes come to the Chain all the time but nothing lights up his face as much as a grandchild.

In today's society, we have widespread obesity. In the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, we spend as much time talking about obesity and exercise as hunger. We need more people like Ben who have kept themselves in shape. We need people to stay active physically, mentally, and spiritually. Think of the billions we could save in health care costs if more people took Ben's example. Finally, think how much more fun we'd have as a country if instead of just watching America's favorite pastime we would all play it.

May Ben and the Chain Baseball Academy keep up the good work and continue to inspire the rest of us for many years to come.

## IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

**HON. GWEN MOORE**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 13, 2011*

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. Iran activities are troubling and our Nation must continue to work to build an international coalition to pressure and isolate Iran until it verifiably ends such activities. The policies we use to effect our goals are as important as the rhetoric about being tough on Iran.

I vote for this legislation while noting it has flaws that must be addressed in the other body, in cooperation with the Administration. I will speak to some of those needed changes in a minute. However, I think other provisions such as language targeting government officials who commit human rights abuses and the provisions aimed at stopping Iran's Revolutionary Guard from trying to evade current U.S. and multilateral sanctions make sense. When the U.S. and our international allies work together, our efforts on Iran, including sanctions and diplomacy, are more effective and stronger. The same can be said when the Congress and the Administration are working together.

We should not confuse support for this bill with the fact that there exists a vast divergence of views in this Congress on the best policy to deal with the threat posed by Iran. However, the Republican majority determines the schedule and has made a choice to bring this bill up under a procedure that prevents any Member with other ideas (either to make the bill stronger or weaker depending on your view) from making further changes to it.

Even with my yes vote, I believe this legislation is in need of improvement. Sending a strong message is one thing but enacting an effective policy that supports that message is another. And this bill must be improved so our policy can match the strong message.

Where can this bill be improved? I have long been concerned and I have expressed those concerns on this floor before about unilateral sanctions. Treasury Secretary Geithner said last year, "to be truly effective in ending Iran's proliferation activities and Iran's support for terrorism, we need to have in place a concerted, international approach. This is not something the United States can do alone. We need other countries to move with us." I concur wholeheartedly.

Yet, I know that the Administration has warned some provisions, like mandatory Iranian Central Bank Sanctions, may end up splintering the international coalition that it worked relentlessly to build as exemplified by passage of last year's UN Security Council Sanction Resolution. In a recent letter, Secretary Geithner made clear his concerns that sanctioning the Central Bank of Iran could negatively affect "many of our closest allies and largest trading partners." Again, the most likely to be adversely affected by this bill are our closest allies, the ones we depend on to pressure Iran.

Why would this be so? According to Secretary Geithner, "rather than motivating these countries to join us in increasing pressure on Iran, they are more likely to resent our actions and resist following our lead—a consequence that would serve the Iranians more than it harms them." The Administration has suggested ways to achieve the goals of this bill while ensuring we don't cripple the international coalition and consensus that it has worked so hard to build against Iran. Congress should listen. A piece of legislation that results in fewer countries working with us to isolate Iran and bring a verifiable end to its troubling nuclear activities is not a victory in my book.

Another provision in the bill—added in Committee—would prohibit U.S. diplomatic or other contact, whether intentionally or incidentally, with certain Iranian government officials. Whether intended by its authors or not, concerns have been raised about negative impact on our diplomatic efforts. I urge the Senate to remove this provision. It adds nothing to the bill's effectiveness but brings unnecessary confusion and controversy.

H.R. 1905 would also require the President to report, after its enactment, on negative impacts the bill would cause on our relations with friendly nations and on the U.S. economy. I think this gets it backwards. We need to get a better bill that addresses those concerns up front, rather than wait until after we have shattered the international coalition.

Again, I support a strong and unified international effort against Iran with U.S. leadership but my continued support for this legislation requires those in Senate (who will have the opportunity to amend it unlike the House did) to work with the Administration to address possible negative impacts on our diplomatic efforts, economy, and the Iranian people. This occurred last year to get CISADA passed and I hope we repeat it again this time.

Lastly, no one should take passage of this legislation as a sign that diplomacy is off the table and that the only option going forward is a military strike. We need to invest in diplomacy—maybe now more than ever—and to continue to work with our international allies and others interested in peace and stability in the region.

## TRIBUTE TO THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

**HON. KEN CALVERT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 15, 2011*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the United States Armed Forces and Intelligence Services on the occasion of the successful completion of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Nine years ago our country embarked on a military campaign to end the tyrannical rule of Saddam Hussein, bring the Iraqi people freedom and make the world a safer place. The road has not been an easy one to travel but through it all our U.S. service members have persevered. From the insurgency in the al Anbar Province to the violence in Baghdad, to the ultimate success of the surge, our troops did not lose sight of the goal. As the enemy