

first signs of the closing of parts of our open society appeared after the Oklahoma City bombing, well before 9/11. This bill grows more urgent as an increasing variety of security measures proliferate throughout the country without any thought about the effects on common freedoms and ordinary public access, and without any guidance from the government or elsewhere. Take the example of government buildings. Federal building security has gotten so out of control that a tourist passing by a Federal building cannot even get in to use the restroom or enjoy the many restaurants located in areas otherwise devoid of such amenities. The security for Federal buildings has too long resided only in the hands of non-security experts, who do not take into account actual threats and, as a result, spend lavish amounts of taxpayer dollars on needless security procedures. For example, several years ago, Government Accountability Office investigators carried bomb-making materials into 10 high-security Federal buildings and then assembled them in the bathrooms. This scandal shines a light on the failure to use risk-based assessments in the allocation of resources.

The bill I reintroduce today would begin a systematic investigation that fully takes into account the importance of maintaining our democratic traditions while responding adequately to the real and substantial threat that terrorism poses. To accomplish its difficult mission, the bill authorizes a 21-member commission, with the President designating nine members and the House and Senate each designating six members, to investigate the balance of openness and security. The commission would be composed not only of military and security experts, but, for the first time, they would be at the same table with experts from such fields as business, architecture, technology, law, city planning, art, engineering, philosophy, history, sociology, and psychology. To date, questions of security most often have been left almost exclusively to security and military experts. They are indispensable participants, but these experts cannot alone resolve all the new and unprecedented issues raised by terrorism in an open society. In order to strike the security/access balance required by our democratic traditions, a diverse group of experts needs to be at the same table.

For years, parts of our open society have gradually been closed down because of terrorism and the fear of terrorism, from checkpoints on streets near the Capitol, even when there are no alerts, to applications of technology without regard to their effects on privacy.

Following the unprecedented terrorist attack on our country on 9/11, Americans expected additional and increased security adequate to protect citizens against this frightening threat. However, in our country, people also expect government to be committed and smart enough to undertake this awesome new responsibility without depriving them of their personal liberty. These times will long be remembered for the rise of terrorism in the world and in this country and the unprecedented challenges it has brought. We must provide ever-higher levels of security for our people and public spaces while maintaining a free and open democratic society. Yet this is no ordi-

nary threat that we expect to be over in a matter of years. The end point could be generations from now. The indeterminate nature of the threat adds to the necessity of putting aside ad hoc approaches to security developed in isolation from the goal of maintaining an open society.

When we have faced unprecedented and perplexing issues in the past, we have had the good sense to investigate them deeply before moving to resolve them. Examples include the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (also known as the 9/11 Commission), the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (also known as the Silberman-Robb Commission), and the Kerner Commission, which investigated the riots that swept American cities in the 1960s and 1970s. The important difference in this bill is that the Commission seeks to act before a crisis-level erosion of basic freedoms takes hold and becomes entrenched. Because global terrorism is likely to be long lasting, we cannot afford to allow the proliferation of security measures that neither requires nor is subject to advanced civilian oversight, or analysis of alternatives and repercussions on freedom and commerce.

With no vehicles for leadership on issues of security and openness, we have been left to muddle through, using blunt 19th century approaches, such as crude blockades, unsightly barriers around beautiful monuments, and other signals that our society is closing down, all without appropriate exploration of possible alternatives. The threat of terrorism to an open society is too serious to be left to ad hoc problem-solving. Such approaches are often as inadequate as they are menacing.

We can do better, but only if we recognize and come to grips with the complexities associated with maintaining a society of free and open access in a world characterized by unprecedented terrorism. The place to begin is with a high-level commission of experts from a broad array of disciplines to help chart the new course that will be required to protect our people and our precious democratic institutions and traditions.

A TRIBUTE TO ELLEN  
SNORTLAND, 29TH CONGRES-  
SIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF  
THE YEAR—2012

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year during the month of March, we pay special tribute to the accomplishments made by our nation's most distinguished women.

I stand today to pay tribute to Ellen Snortland of Altadena, California, who is an inspiring and extraordinary individual. Ellen has spent her life following a variety of passions ranging from human rights to journalism to self defense. Ms. Snortland received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Irvine in Theater and Film, and later a Juris Doctor, JD, from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles. After

graduating, Ellen decided that she could provide the most service to her community as an advocate for women and children, a teacher, performer and media professional.

Ms. Snortland is the author of *Beauty Bites Beast*, which has been translated in Portuguese and Spanish, featured on Dateline NBC, and sold around the world. Ellen has also performed "Now that She's Gone," a one-woman show, which is a touching piece about family and forgiveness, and in 2008, was nominated for a Pulitzer in Drama. She has performed this show in New York, Los Angeles, Kansas, and France among other cities, states and countries.

She is currently a Board Member and lead female instructor for IMPACT personal safety, and teaches young boys and girls how to defend themselves from predators, both physically and verbally. She provides valuable services to our youth which they can draw from for their entire lives.

Ellen's accomplishments and roles in our community are innumerable. She serves on the Board of 50/50 Leadership and Consumer Watchdog, and is the Past President of the United Nations Association, Pasadena/Foothills Chapter. Ellen attended the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in the year of 2001, and the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women for many years as part of the U.N. Press Corps as well as a NGO delegate.

Today, Ms. Snortland is a columnist for the Pasadena Weekly and a blogger for Ms. Magazine and Huffington Post. Ellen's work has been exceptional, and has proven that one woman can truly achieve all she sets her mind to.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Ellen Snortland, for her exceptional service to the community.

ANDREA HILL

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Andrea Hill for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Andrea Hill is a 7th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Andrea Hill is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Andrea Hill for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.