

have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MR.  
CUB, ERNIE BANKS

**HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2015*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary life and accomplishments of Ernie Banks—known by Chicagoans as “Mr. Cub.”

Chicago lost a true hero and friend when Ernie Banks passed away on Friday, January 23. His baseball accomplishments are legendary. During his playing days, cheers would always erupt at Wrigley Field when Banks would make a clutch hit or a spectacular diving catch. His greatness was well acknowledged: Banks was voted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1977—the very first year he was eligible.

While Banks excelled on the field, he also blazed a trail off of it. As the first African-American player for the Chicago Cubs, he was a pioneer in our community and across the country. Banks treated people well, got along with most everyone and stood for justice even as he faced discrimination. During road trips, hotels and restaurants open to his white teammates were often closed to him and other African-Americans. I am happy to see how far we have come as a country throughout the course of his career and his lifetime.

Banks founded the Ernie Banks Live Above and Beyond Foundation, which helps promote social welfare and assist youth and seniors who may need assistance. I know he was very proud of the young players on Chicago's own Jackie Robinson West team who won the Little League championship last year.

According to Fox Chicago, Jackie Robinson West player Lawrence Noble said, ‘I met [Ernie Banks] during the summer and he was such an inspirational person to me, it was just very sad hearing that he passed away.’

It's clear that the next generation appreciates the impact of Mr. Cub. We can honor the legacy of Mr. Cub by doing our own part to break down barriers and build a better community. We will miss you, Ernie.

MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE  
ACT AMENDMENT

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 26, 2015*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 246, a bill “To Improve The Response To Victims Of Child Sex Trafficking,” which broadens the issues to be reported on the federal tip line on Internet-related child sexual exploitation run by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to explicitly include child sex trafficking—specifically, by replacing the term “child prostitution” with the term “child sex trafficking, including child prostitution.”

Trafficking in humans is a major problem across the globe and in our own country. As

lawmakers, we have a moral responsibility to combat this scourge and protect our children, especially those without parents to care for them, from being exploited and falling through the cracks.

As the Founder and Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I understand how important it is to defend those who are too young to defend themselves.

This problem is personal for me because according to the U.S. Department of Justice, my home city of Houston, Texas is the epicenter of human trafficking in the United States with over 200 active brothels in Houston and two new ones opening each month.

Houston has also surpassed Las Vegas for the dubious distinction of having the most strip clubs and illicit spas serving as fronts for sex trafficking.

Human trafficking in Texas is not limited to Houston. During the 2011 Dallas Super Bowl, 133 underage arrests for prostitution were made and during this year's massive effort “Operation Cross Country” led by the FBI, several pimps were arrested.

Between 1998 and 2003 more than 500 people from 18 countries were ensnared in 57 forced labor operations in almost a dozen cities throughout the State of Texas.

The Justice Department's Internet Crimes against Children Task Force (which coordinates with 61 federal, state and local law enforcement task forces) reports that the number of child victims of prostitution increased by more than 900% between 2004 and 2008.

Currently, our state child welfare systems do not properly identify and help the children that have been taken by this horrible industry.

Even more disturbing is that the protections provided by our child welfare systems often do not extend to young victims of trafficking.

Hard as it is to believe, in some states trafficked youths are not even regarded or classified as victims.

Rather, they are treated as youthful offenders and consigned to the criminal justice system.

These kids are not criminals. They are victims, robbed of their innocence by adult criminals.

They are boys and girls who have been taken advantage of and are unable to escape an ugly system.

I support H.R. 246 because it is focused on using technology to minimize the sex trafficking of vulnerable children and empowers people by giving the opportunity and means to report suspicious activity.

Under current law, the Health and Human Services Department (HHS) provides an annual grant to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for a range of activities, including running a tip line that allows online users and Internet service providers to report Internet-related child sexual exploitation.

This tip line includes reports on child pornography, online enticement of children for sexual acts, child prostitution, sex tourism involving children, extra familial child sexual molestation, unsolicited obscene material sent to a child, misleading domain names and misleading words or digital images on the Internet.

I strongly support H.R. 246 and urge my colleague to join me in voting for its passage which will help bring an end to the evil practice that is child sex trafficking.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT  
OF COLUMBIA BUDGET AUTON-  
OMY ACT OF 2015

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2015*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, District of Columbia residents raise billions of dollars annually for their local budget, and, like Americans everywhere, claim the right to control the funds they themselves raise to support their city as fundamental to their American citizenship. Therefore, today I introduce the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act of 2015, the second bill I introduce this Congress, to allow the District's local-taxpayer-raised budget to take effect immediately when passed by the city, without being subject to congressional approval.

Control over the dollars raised by local taxpayers is central to local control, the oldest American government principle. Beyond this core principle, permitting the city's local budget to become law without a redundant congressional approval would have multiple practical benefits for both the city and Congress. For the city, a timely budget means eliminating the uncertainty of the congressional approval process, which has a significant negative effect on the city's bond rating, adding unnecessary interest costs for local taxpayers; improving the District's ability to make accurate revenue forecasts; and reducing the countless operational problems that result when the city's budget cannot be implemented until Congress approves it (even when it is not delayed, which rarely occurs). Also of major importance, the bill would permit the District to use the typical state and local government fiscal year (July 1–June 30), which is used to provide ample time to prepare for the opening of schools in September, instead of the current federal fiscal year (October 1–September 30), used for the convenience of Members of Congress, not the needs of the city. Moreover, the D.C. local budget consumes valuable subcommittee, committee, and floor time in both houses of Congress, the most inefficient and redundant annual process in the Congress. Yet the D.C. budget is of interest only to those members who use it to promote their own issues, violating a principle of local self-government that they value for their own districts and states.

Increasing recognition of the hardships and delays caused by the congressional approval process has led Congress to begin freeing the city from many congressional constraints. We made significant progress in the last Congress on a major element of budget autonomy. There is unprecedented bipartisan and bicameral support for preventing D.C. shutdowns, which have been constantly threatened as the Congress now almost always fails to pass appropriations bills. Under the fiscal year 2014 D.C. Appropriations bill, D.C. was, for the first time ever, exempt from shutdowns for an entire fiscal year—2015. The fiscal year 2015 D.C. Appropriations bill also exempts D.C. from shutdowns for all of fiscal year 2016. In addition, the president's budgets last Congress and the Senate's D.C. appropriations bills would have granted D.C. budget autonomy. This progress from both Congress and the Executive invites the inevitable next step—a permanent shutdown exemption bill.