

RECOGNIZING W.H. JEFFERSON FUNERAL HOME, INC. FOR ITS CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 26, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a minority owned business of Vicksburg, Mississippi, W.H. Jefferson Funeral Home, Inc.

W.H. Jefferson Funeral Home, Inc., is the oldest funeral home in the state of Mississippi. Established in 1894 by William H. and Lucy C. Jefferson, W.H. Jefferson Funeral Home has served Vicksburg and surrounding communities for 118 years, under the direction and sole ownership of members of the Jefferson family.

Both William H. and Lucy C. Jefferson were active in their community and served in various social and civic organizations. The Jefferson torch of service has been passed along for generations. The family's commitment to meeting the sovereign needs of its customers during their time of bereavement has been the business' anchor, even during some of the country's most trying economic times.

Today W.H. Jefferson Funeral Home, Inc. continues to carry on the tradition of dignity and compassion for its clients.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring, W.H. Jefferson Funeral Home, Inc. and their contributions to their community.

RECOGNIZING MR. GENE GRUBER FOR WINNING HIS 5TH, AND HIS FAMILY'S 15TH, USA NATIONAL PLOWING TITLE

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 26, 2012

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Gene Gruber of Richmond, Minnesota, upon being awarded his 5th, and his family's 15th, USA National Plowing Title on August 6, 2012.

Mr. Gruber's victory means that he will represent the USA at the 60th World Plowing Contest in Olds, Alberta, Canada, on July 19–20, 2013. Going against 31 other countries, he will compete for the 5th time internationally, and in his last international competition in New Zealand (2010) he finished 9th. Mr. Gruber's skill and ability with the plow are only matched by his generosity, as he has not hesitated to teach other plowmen across the United States the knowledge necessary to be a plowing champion.

As farmers across the nation work to put food on the tables of all Americans, we can respect the dedication and industriousness that they show as they labor to grow and plow their crops every year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body to join with me in recognizing Mr. Gene Gruber upon this award.

HONORING THE TARAPANI FAMILY FOR 101 YEARS OF BUSINESS AND SERVICE IN TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 26, 2012

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Tarapani family of Tarpon Springs, Florida, on the accomplishment of 101 years of business and service in Tarpon Springs, Florida. Throughout their time in the United States, the Tarapani family has lived the American Dream, applying hard work and determination to create a successful small business in our community.

Having emigrated from Lithuania to the United States through Ellis Island as a young boy, Abraham Tarapani opened his first storefront in Tarpon Springs in 1911. The store was an old-fashioned dry goods store, selling clothing, fabrics, hats and other general merchandise. To this day, the Tarapani Department Store proudly serves the people of Tarpon Springs and northern Pinellas County.

Over the last century, the Tarapani family has become a staple of the Tarpon Springs business and civic communities. Through four generations, members of the family have actively and attentively served their local customers, while also serving the greater community with their participation on many boards and associations, including the American Legion, the Tarpon Springs Rotary Club, the Tarpon Springs Chamber of Commerce, the Tarpon Springs Board of Commissioners and the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, among others. Abraham Tarapani and his wife, Margaret, had two children: Helen and Abe, Jr. Abe, Jr. and his wife, Florida Belle, had three children: Abe III, John and Florida Belle. And finally, John had a son, Townsend. These members of the Tarapani family represent four generations and their contributions have helped to make Tarpon Springs a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, for more than 100 years the Tarapani family has represented the best of the American entrepreneurial spirit. The family has become a pillar of the local Tarpon Springs community. Their economic success and ability to adapt with the changing times exemplify the strength of this country's business community, and I commend them for their contributions to our area.

“REPEAL AN OLD RELIC”

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 26, 2012

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago this week then President George H.W. Bush signed the FREEDOM Support Act into law. This law gave money to the countries of the former Soviet Union to help them build democracies from the rubble of failed communism.

That is, except one. Wrapped up in this big bill was a tiny provision, called “Section 907,” that forbid any money from going to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is a strong partner of the United States. After 9/11, Azerbaijan allowed our planes to fly in its airspace and contributed troops to Afghanistan. With 7 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, it will be an important player in increasing Europe's energy security. The country is also a predominantly Muslim country that is a friend of Israel and the free market system, unlike its tyrannical neighbor Iran. Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama recognized the importance of our alliance with Azerbaijan and waived Section 907 via Executive Order every year since 2001.

In fact, from Secretary Albright to Secretary Powell, Secretaries of State from both Republican and Democrat administrations over the last 20 years have supported the repeal of Section 907. Congress should do away with this archaic and obsolete relic of the past and repeal Section 907. And that's just the way it is.

HONORING THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF TERRENCE “TERRY” O'BRIEN

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 26, 2012

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the long and distinguished career of Terry O'Brien, President of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Terry will retire this November, after 24 years of exemplary public service to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC). Mr. O'Brien's integrity, along with his proven ability to be an effective leader, helped him to be elected President of the MWRDGC in 1997 for a two year term. As of 2011, he has been re-elected President eight times unanimously by his fellow commissioners.

Stemming from a long career in the environmental field, Mr. O'Brien has been able to bring extensive knowledge to enhance and streamline many of the tasks and responsibilities of the District at the least possible cost to local taxpayers. Further, based on his highest possible standard of public service and strong business sense, under President O'Brien's leadership, the MWRDGC is one of the few governmental agencies in the State of Illinois to have an AAA bond rating. This is a testament to his dedication to the citizens of the Chicagoland area to secure the highest possible return on investment. During his term as President the MWRDGC has abated over \$262 million dollars back to the taxpayers of Cook County. In addition, Mr. O'Brien is an aggressive vocal advocate for maintaining the health of area residents by preventing pollution in Lake Michigan, local rivers, and streams. He has actively pursued continuous funding for the MWRDGC's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP); this large undertaking captures sewer overflow before it can pollute the drinking water supply. Since TARP's implementation in 1985, over 950 billion gallons of combined sewer overflow have been captured that otherwise would have polluted the area waterways. The system's final tunnel was completed in May of 2006, making all 109 miles of tunnel operational during rain events in Cook County.