EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REAL ID ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 418) to establish and rapidly implement regulations for State driver's license and identification document security standards, to prevent terrorists from abusing the asylum laws of the United States, to unify terrorism-related grounds for inadmissibility and removal, and to ensure expeditious construction of the San Diego border fence.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 418—the REAL ID Act. This bill both distorts and undermines the bipartisan recommendations of the 9/11 Commission which were crafted to make Americans safer and more secure.

The REAL ID Act actually deletes key 9/11 recommendations which were codified in law by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, provisions that have yet to be enacted,

Specifically, the REAL ID Act deletes driver's license provisions from the 2004 bill. Proponents of the REAL ID Act argue that this country needs national standards for driver's licenses and State identification documents. The 9/11 Commission took this issue very seriously and issued recommendations which were included in the House, Senate and White House-approved bill. The legislation expressly orders the Department of Transportation, the Department of Homeland Security, and States to work together to set national standards for driver's licensees.

The REAL ID Act removes this provision and instead imposes an inflexible Federal statute for our State governments. The 9/11 Commission legislation was intended to ensure that the States would have a voice in crafting national standards; it did not suggest that the Federal Government hijack the right of States to issue identification to their residents.

The bill also enacts tough new immigration provisions that could bar legitimate asylum seekers from receiving refuge in the United States. It also restricts the right of judges to review decisions by immigration officials at the borders to reject asylum applications. In truth, victims of torture and other forms of persecution could actually be deported into the hands of their persecutors, a reality that runs contrary to our fundamental values of freedom and liberty.

Even the White House has expressed reservations about the asylum provisions in the bill, and has already called for modifications "to ensure the changes do not unintentionally create new barriers to asylum."

I believe we need to keep our focus where it belongs, on identifying and apprehending terrorists, and on making our country more secure. We should adhere to the laws enacted by the President and both houses of Congress, and give them a chance to work before we begin repealing them.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2005

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I missed two votes on bills last week to designate the U.S. courthouse in Jacksonville, FL, as the "John Milton Bryan Simpson United States Courthouse" and the Federal building and U.S. courthouse in Dayton, OH, as the "Tony Hall Federal Building and United States Courthouse." Had I been present for rollcall votes Nos. 21 and 22, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE DONALD E. BELFI

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2005

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend and devoted public servant, the Honorable Donald E. Belfi. Mr. Belfi is retiring as Nassau County Court Judge after 44 years of dedicated service to the court.

A long and distinguished history of accomplishment and community leadership marks Judge Belfi's career. A graduate of Georgetown University and Fordham University School of Law, Mr. Belfi has committed himself to serving the public as a member of the legal profession.

After several years of service as Assistant District Attorney in both New York and Nassau Counties, and 10 years of service as Nassau County District Court Judge, Mr. Belfi earned the post of Nassau County Court Judge. As County Court Judge for more than 20 years, Judge Belfi presided over hundreds of criminal trials, many of which were high profile cases. Among these is the Colin Ferguson Long Island Railroad Case, a matter I hold close to my heart. On a personal level, this was the first time I had ever been exposed to the court system. Judge Belfi held the dignity of his courtroom every day, making the trial bearable for me, my family and so many of the victims of the Long Island Railroad massacre.

Judge Belfi's commitment to the community does not end inside the courtroom. Mr. Belfi has served as commissioner of Rockville Centre Little League, and as a member of several notable groups, including the Knights of Columbus, the Association for the Help of Retarded Children, and the St. Agnes Cathedral Parish Council. He also contributed over 20 years to Georgetown University as both an interviewer and a recruiter for the school. Widely recognized throughout the community, Judge Belfi's efforts and achievements have been rewarded with countless honors. Among these is the Fraternal Order of Court Officers Bench and Bar Award, the Criminal Courts Bar Association's Norman F. Lent Award, the Fordham Law Almuni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award, the DeStefano Industries Annual Award, and the Court Officer's Benevolent Association of Nassau County Fidelis Juris Award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in congratulating Judge Belfi on his admirable career, and recognizing his numerous accomplishments. I cannot even begin to express my deep gratitude and appreciation for his service to the community. Together with his wife of 35 years, five children, and two grandchildren, I send him my sincerest wishes for happiness and fulfillment as he begins this next chapter of his life.

ARTICLE BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2005

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to the following article written by my constituent, Rabbi Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach. A son of Polish Holocaust survivors, he grew up in Haifa, Israel. He is past President of the Hampton Roads Board of Rabbis and Cantors.

The final departure of Chairman Yasser Arafat is of one who eluded death many a time. During Israel's 1982 incursion into Lebanon to remove the menacing PLO mini-state within a state it was, ironically, Ariel Sharon, then Defense Minister, who ordered a sniper who "had" Arafat not to kill him. This is an opportunity to reflect on a man who could have made a critical difference and yet was not able to seize a unique offer granted him for radical self-transformation as well as a collective transition for his long-enduring people. How redemptive it would have been to break the deadly cycle of Palestinian missed opportunities!

In a fateful moment of truth in 2000 Arafat rebuffed former Prime Minister Barak's most forthcoming offer that would by now have guaranteed statehood in a favorable context to his frustrated people. It also would have prevented the flow of calculated bloodshed which the stubborn refusal and far-reaching blunder in judgment brought about. For the past four years Arafat unleashed with a nod of approval an unparalleled torrent of terrorist suicide bombings against Israel's civilian population that no nation would have tolerated for that long, and then many even decried the erection of a defensive barrier.

Arafat, the father of contemporary terrorism, was already uninhibited early on in his choice of terror as a means to accomplish

political goals. For example, he was behind the 1974 school children massacre in Israel's northern town of Ma'alot. Ultimately he was unwilling or incapable to lay to rest the Palestinian case and cause, assuming the normalcy of civil life that his own people might be rehabilitated and build the political, economic and social infrastructure necessary for the emergence of their democratic society and a viable state that would not threaten Israel nor Jordan from which his troublesome cohorts were evicted by the late King Hussein in ''Black September'' of 1970. Unlike the likes of South African Nelson Mandela who knew how to leave and live with a painful past, charting a new course for the sake of his people, Arafat would not shed his ubiquitous military uniform and the old persona of violent defiance. He thus allowed the terrorist within him to win over the peacemaker he triumphantly became for a brief time following his ''resurrection'' by Israel from obscure exile in Tunisia. How sad that the honor of the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize could not keep him in check.

Admittedly, I was among those who applauded Arafat when he and his peace partner, Yitzchak Rabin of blessed memory, shook hands in the South Lawn of the White House on that bright day of promise in September 1993. I wanted to believe that Arafat, whose hands were stained with the blood of so many of my brethren, could rise to the precious opportunity to redeem himself and restore dignity to his people while bringing peace to a beleaguered Israel.

At this new crossroads of the post-Arafat era, will the Palestinian Authority wisely reach out to refashion itself sans the oppressive, conflict-ridden and corrupt style of its deceased leader, allowing its permanent neighbor Israel to be a blessing to her?

INTRODUCTION OF TEA LU (H.R. 3) HIGHWAY, TRANSIT AND HIGHWAY SAFETY AUTHORIZATION BILL

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2005

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, on February 9, 2005, I introduced H.R. 3, the Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users, TEA LU. This is a 6-year authorization of Federal highway, transit and highway safety programs. These programs are all currently operating under an extension since the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, TEA 21, expired on September 30, 2003. The current extension—which is the sixth extension of these programs—will expire on May 31, 2005. We must pass this bill and successfully complete conference with the Senate before the Memorial Day recess begins. We must get this job done. American jobs and the continuing growth of the U.S. economy directly depend on the successful enactment of this authorization.

On February 7, 2005, President Bush introduced his fiscal year 2006 budget. I was pleased that the budget includes an updated reauthorization proposal funding Federal highway, transit and highway safety programs at $283.9 billion over 6 years in guaranteed funding. This is a $28 billion increase above the proposal introduced by the administration 2 years ago, and I applaud the administration's recognition of the pressing needs of America's highways and transit systems in this higher number. The bill I introduced also funds the same programs at $283.9 billion in guaranteed funding over 6 years, 2004 through 2009. I strongly believe that we have a much better chance of moving this legislation quickly in the 109th Congress, now that we are working with the same top line funding level that the President has endorsed.

The other reason that this $283.9 billion guaranteed funding level may sound familiar is that it was the total 6-year guaranteed funding level that was under discussion in last year's conference negotiations. I am committed to getting back to conference as fast as possible.

There are no major policy changes between this bill and last year's authorization bill, which passed the House by a vote of 357 to 65 on April 2, 2004. The policies in H.R. 3 represent months of intense negotiations within the committee, with other House Members, and with stakeholder organizations.

I will work closely with the leadership, the Ways and Means Committee chairman, and the chairman of the Budget Committee as we further refine this bill and prepare for committee markup and floor passage. I urge the House membership's strong support of TEA LU, particularly since we now have the administration's endorsement of the total funding level.

Let's get this job done, so that our Nation's commerce can move quickly and efficiently, commuters can get to work faster and easier, waste less gas sitting in traffic, and spend more time with their families. States, communities, workers and industries around the country are waiting for us to act on this reauthorization. Let's get it done.

REAL ID ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursady, February 10, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 418) to establish and rapidly implement regulations for State driver's license and identification document security standards, to prevent terrorists from abusing the asylum laws of the United States, to unify terrorism-related grounds for inadmissibility and removal, and to ensure expeditious construction of the San Diego border fence.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Chairman, with the passage of H.R. 418, The REAL ID Act of 2005, on Thursday, February 10, 2005, we took a much-needed step in ensuring that we do not have repeat terrorist attacks similar to those witnessed on September 11, 2001. This bill, at a minimal, will make certain that individuals who attempt to board planes will have to provide proof that they are who they claim to be.

While I believe that this is a positive, I do remain concerned over the usurping of what has historically been a right authorized to the States. I will continue to diligently work with the State of Nevada to guarantee that there remains limited infringement by the Federal Government on their right to legislate.

Further, Mr. Chairman, I offer my assistance to the State of Nevada in securing any grant funding that will be helpful in easing the burden that the State may incur during the period that it seeks to comply with the law.

Mr. Chairman, while I appreciate the House's action on this important bill, I want to remind my colleagues that it is vital that we continue to take a close examination of any piece of legislation that comes before our chamber that may infringe on rights guaranteed to the States.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the centennial of Rotary International. On February 23, 1905, four Chicago businessmen, Paul Harris, Silvester Schiele, Gustavus Loehr and Hiram Shorey, formed the first Rotary Club, which they hoped would foster fellowship and community service. Three years after the first Rotary Club was established, the second club was founded in San Francisco. Rotary now has a presence in 165 countries around the world.

Guided by the principle of ''service above self,'' Rotary has devised a four way test for its members. Rotarians ask of the things they say or do: Is it the truth, is it fair to all concerned, will it build good will and better friendships and will it be beneficial to all concerned. Rotarians perform all actions regardless of political affiliation or ethnicity.

Our distinguished colleague the Honorable Thomas P. ''Tip'' O'Neill was widely known for his friendly admonition that all politics is local. This is true for Rotary whose global reach begins at the local level. In 1985, local Rotary Club members pledged to stamp out polio with the PolioPlus campaign. Since then, Rotarians have raised hundreds of millions of dollars to vaccinate people all over the world with the goal of eliminating polio by the end of this year. Rotary International is also playing an active role in responding to the tsunami and earthquake victims in South and Southeast Asia. I am proud to announce that Rotary District 5150, of which my Congressional District is part of, has responded by donating over $50,000 to the relief effort in the month following the disaster. Rotary District 5150 has set a noble goal to raise $250,000 for tsunami relief, and is also attempting to establish a ''Rotary village'' of permanent dwellings in Sri Lanka.

The Rotary Club is also the largest privately funded source of international scholarships. Each year, over 1,100 university students receive some $26 million in scholarships for the Rotary Ambassador Scholarship. Since its inception in 1947, over 30,000 extraordinary men and women from over 100 nations have benefited from the Rotary Ambassador Scholarship and have used such a wonderful opportunity to promote global understanding and solidarity. Each year, Rotary District 5150 contributes to this deserving program by sending an exceptional student abroad with an Ambassador Scholarship. It is through these generous grants and other scholarships, that the Rotary empowers a new generation of leaders, furthers peace in the global community and upholds service as the highest of ideals.

Mr. Speaker, because Rotary International recognizes the importance of a global worldview, it has recently launched Rotary