

with the skills to guide him through the ranks of the Tennessee Highway Patrol. As a testament to this young man's character over 1,110 people attended his funeral service.

Through this senseless tragedy, I hope the people of Tennessee will reflect on how much we actually owe the law enforcement officers who risk everything for the sake of protecting us. I will continue praying for their safety and that of their loved ones.

At this difficult time I doubt many words will comfort his wife, mother, father, brothers, sister and extended family during this time of profound loss. They should know that the State of Tennessee is deeply saddened by their loss and will forever appreciate Trooper Jenks's service. As Horatio said in Shakespeare's Hamlet, "Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

MOURNING THE PASSING OF
PRESIDENT GERALD RUDOLPH
FORD

SPEECH OF

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Madam Speaker, last week, Congress received the body of the late President Gerald Rudolph Ford, our 38th President, to lie in State in the Rotunda. He was the second President for whom I felt such an endearment that it felt as if I'd lost a friend.

I first met President Ford along with President Carter several years ago when I called on both men to support legislation I had introduced to give those who had been incarcerated, paid their debt to society, and had become productive citizens a restoration of their voting rights. In speaking with him, I found him to be very sensitive and understanding of that important issue. He said that it was the decent thing to do and signed a letter (along with President Carter and myself) asking President George W. Bush to submit a proclamation to all States to ensure these citizens' voting rights.

Two years later, I had the opportunity to meet with him and his beloved wife, Betty, at Rancho Mirage along with Governor Schwarzenegger and others to discuss federal legislation for California. We continued our discussion on voting rights, and I became further impressed with his modesty despite the fact that he had served at the highest level in this country.

Gerald R. Ford was a man of character and integrity, with many accomplishments to his credit. He was a Boy Scout, and the only President who has ever attained the rank of Eagle Scout. He was a football star for the University of Michigan where he majored in political science and economics while leading his team to two national titles. He studied at Yale Law School and opened his own law practice in Grand Rapids, Michigan before joining the Navy where he served as an officer during World War II and earned several medals.

In 1948, Gerald R. Ford was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives where he served until 1973. He was the Republican Mi-

nority Leader from 1965–1973. During his years in the House, Ford was, as the New York Times described, "a negotiator and a reconciler." On October 12, 1973, Ford was appointed Vice President of the United States after Spiro Agnew resigned. He became President after the resignation of Richard Nixon on August 9, 1974. President Gerald R. Ford is the only person to ever serve as both Vice President and President without being elected to either office.

As President, one of Ford's first actions was to pardon President Nixon, allowing the nation to heal and move on. Although this action was highly criticized at the time and may have cost him the election in 1976, it helped to restore Americans' faith in the office of the President. President Ford successfully addressed high inflation and unemployment while ending American involvement in Vietnam and pursuing international human rights through the Helsinki Accords, helping end the Cold War.

President Ford's legacy extends far beyond his accomplishments, however. More than anything else, President Gerald R. Ford will be remembered for his character, integrity, and humility. Gerald R. Ford was a very decent and humble human being. As Americans, we mourn more than the loss of a former President—we mourn the loss of a truly great American.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATIONS ACT
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1 which will carry out the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

In 2002, Congress passed and funded a distinguished bipartisan panel to investigate and report on the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on our country. In spite of the urgency and critical nature of the panel's report and recommendations, the Bush administration and the Republican-led Congress failed to implement key recommendations that would improve the defense of our Nation such as enhancing homeland security and developing strategies to prevent the spread of Islamic terrorism and the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists.

Putting into action only a few of the Commission's carefully thought out recommendations did only half the job. And we all know that protecting America is a full-time job requiring full-time vigilance and full-time protection. This is especially true in today's post-9/11 world.

For the past 4 years, I have had the privilege of serving on the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. As a member of that subcommittee, I heard testimony and attended briefings from officials at the Department of Homeland Security that brought to light the shortcomings of this Department and its failure to meet its mandate to secure our borders and protect our country. The then Chairman of the committee even withheld funding due to the Department's unresponsiveness and apparent lack of urgency about its mission.

Mr. Speaker, protecting our country must be our government's number one priority. If that mission lacks urgency by the very agency created to protect us, we will continue to remain dangerously vulnerable to those who would harm us.

I believe that putting into action all of the Commission's recommendations is urgently needed to help protect our country against a terrorist attack. And under our new Democratic leadership, which will be vigilant in its oversight and in holding the administration accountable, I am confident Democrats will push this agency beyond its bureaucratic lethargy to take the steps necessary to secure our homeland and protect our fellow Americans.

While I endorse the entire package of recommendations in the bill under consideration, I am particularly pleased to note that it includes several of the issues I addressed in hearings before the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. These issues are critically important to our Nation and the communities I represent in Los Angeles.

First among them is interoperable communications. Our country lost many heroic first responders on that fateful September morning because they were unable to receive the message to evacuate the Twin Towers. Incredibly, 5 years after 9/11, this serious problem of interoperable communications continues to plague our emergency responders. This is particularly true for first responders in districts like mine, where various communities are covered by multiple jurisdictions of police, sheriff, and fire departments.

I am very pleased that included in this bill is the 9/11 Commission's recommendation to create a grant program for interoperable communications with a dedicated stream of funding. This will greatly enhance the ability of our first responders to close this critically serious communications gap.

Another issue of great concern to my constituents is currently being addressed at Los Angeles world airports. It is the installation of in-line detection systems for checked baggage on commercial airliners. The Commission's recommendations in this bill call for accelerating the installation of in-line explosive detection systems at all major airports.

The cargo hold of airplanes, filled with baggage, has often been called the "soft underbelly" of our aviation transportation system. By placing state of the art detection systems in our Nation's airport, we will harden that vulnerable soft spot and protect the flying public. And by consolidating the handling of baggage and screening equipment we will accelerate the movement of goods, passengers, and cargo.

In committee I have also consistently raised my concerns about the security of cargo containers entering ports such as the Ports of Los Angeles-Long Beach. I am very pleased that this bill goes beyond the Commission's recommendations by requiring, within 5 years, 100 percent scanning of U.S.-bound shipping containers.

We are very fortunate there has not been a port-centered attack on our Nation. As we saw during the 2002 labor dispute that closed the Ports of LA-Long Beach and cost the national economy \$1 billion per day, any long term disruption of our national maritime trade would have a devastating effect on our Nation's economy as well as the rest of the world.