

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING MR. NATHANIEL BLUE ON ACHIEVING THE MILESTONE OF FOUR MILLION SAFE MILES WITH BOYD BROTHERS TRANSPORTATION

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 8, 2007*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Nathaniel Blue of Camden, Alabama, on the occasion of reaching an almost unprecedented level of achievement in the trucking community—logging 4 million consecutive miles with Boyd Brothers Transportation.

Nathaniel has not only worked for the same trucking company for almost 30 years, but during this span, he has never had an accident, negative incident, or ticket; an accomplishment so rare in the trucking industry.

One would think that after logging so many miles, a person would want to retire, but Nathaniel is an exception. He says that he does not want to retire to his hometown of Camden until he reaches 5 million safe miles, and I have every confidence he will achieve this goal.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating him on this remarkable achievement. I know his colleagues, his wife of 29 years, Amanda, their five children and three grandchildren, along with Boyd Brothers Transportation, join me in praising Mr. Blue for these accomplishments and extending thanks for his many efforts over the years on behalf of the citizens of the state of Alabama.

INTRODUCTION OF THE “AFGHAN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 2007”

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 8, 2007*

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the “Afghan Women Empowerment Act of 2007” which would authorize \$45 million each year from FY2008 through FY2010 for programs in Afghanistan that benefit women and girls as well as the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and the Afghan Ministry of Women’s Affairs. The funding would be directed toward important needs including medical care, education, vocational training, protection from violence, legal assistance, and civil participation. This legislation was introduced earlier this year in the Senate by Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA).

Women’s rights in Afghanistan have fluctuated greatly over the years. Women have bravely fought the forces of extremism at various points in the country’s turbulent history. At one time, women were scientists and uni-

versity professors. They led corporations and nonprofit organizations in local communities.

While the Afghan constitution guarantees equality for Afghan women, throughout Afghanistan, women continue to face intimidation, discrimination, and violence. The United States has an obligation to ensure that women and girls have the opportunities that they were denied under the Taliban and that the gains that have been made are not lost in the coming months and years. It is imperative that we provide the support needed to ensure that the rights of women are protected in the new Afghanistan.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINE SPADAFOR-CLAY

**HON. JON C. PORTER**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 8, 2007*

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Christine Spadafor-Clay, the C.E.O. of St. Jude’s Ranch for Children.

Christine is the first woman and non-clergy person to run St. Jude’s Ranch for Children in its 39-year history. St. Jude’s Ranch for Children provides a safe and caring environment for abused, abandoned, and neglected children. Since starting, Christine has overseen a number of organizational changes including updating the record-keeping process and reshaping the organizational structure system. In addition, Christine was instrumental in facilitating a much-needed renovation of the Boulder City campus.

The St. Jude’s facility is spread over 40 acres in Southern Nevada and consists of 24 buildings. Over the years the facilities have come into disrepair and are in need of significant refurbishment. Now, due to Christine’s leadership, St. Jude’s is finally receiving the renovation it deserves. As a result of sizable contribution from a Southern Nevada non-profit, HomeAid, and its partner, Pardee Homes, eight cottages will be completely renovated and the campus will get new landscaping.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Christine Spadafor-Clay of St. Jude’s Ranch for Children. The service that they provide for the area’s abandoned and neglected children is laudable. I applaud Christine for her leadership and with them continued success in their new, refurbished facility.

LIFTING THE EMBARGO—THE BEST WAY TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY IN CUBA

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 8, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to point out the Bush administration’s policy of

isolating Cuba and bringing down the Castro government (or its successor) has no chance of success and enter into the RECORD the first of two parts to an article in the current issue of Foreign Affairs by Julia E. Sweig entitled “Fidel’s Final Victory.” Dr. Sweig’s article analyzes the reality of the current relationship between the U.S. and Cuba and advocates the lifting of the embargo as a means to a more effective advance U.S. interest in establishing an economic relationship with Cuba.

I have long opposed U.S. policy towards Fidel Castro and Cuba, specifically the embargo, as I strongly believe that restricting travel and trade is a failed policy that hinders the American People from competing in the Cuban market and works against the promotion of democracy on the island. It also denies citizens of the United States the fundamental right and freedom to travel where they want and denies Cuban Americans to visit their relatives living in Cuba.

Current United States policy toward Cuba is markedly out of touch with current world realities. Almost every nation has normal trade and diplomatic relations with Cuba, especially many of our allies such as Israel, Spain, China and other European nations. Instead of collapsing, the Cuban economy is growing at a rate of 8 percent a year, and the government has new and profitable relationship involving crude oil drilling operations off of the Cuban coast with China in conjunction with India, Norway and Spain.

It is evident that continuing the current course and making threats about what kind of change is and is not acceptable after Fidel, the Bush administration will only slow the pace of liberalization and political reform in Cuba, guaranteeing many more years of hostility between the two countries.

The best approach to dealing with post-Fidel Cuba is by immediately proposing bilateral crisis management and confidence-building measures, ending economic sanctions, and by stepping out of the way of Cuban Americans and other Americans who wish to travel freely to Cuba. Further, lifting the embargo now will prevent American businesses from falling even further behind as foreign competitors in this market. I urge you to consider H.R. 624, a bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba and for other purposes.

FIDEL’S FINAL VICTORY

(By Julia E. Sweig)

Summary: The smooth transfer of power from Fidel Castro to his successors is exposing the willful ignorance and wishful thinking of U.S. policy toward Cuba. The post-Fidel transition is already well under way, and change in Cuba will come only gradually from here on out. With or without Fidel, renewed U.S. efforts to topple the revolutionary regime in Havana can do no good—and have the potential to do considerable harm.

Julia E. Sweig is Nelson and David Rockefeller Senior Fellow and Director of Latin America Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. She is the author of *Inside the Cuban Revolution: Fidel Castro and the Urban Underground* and *Friendly Fire: Losing*

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