

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO AGNES E. GREEN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Agnes E. Green. Agnes E. Green is the eldest of seven children born to David and Agnes Cokley, and the mother of one son, Eric. She is currently the Assistant Director of Public Affairs at Spring Creek Towers and the Editor-in-Chief of its newspaper, The Spring Creek Sun.

Born and raised in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant and now a resident of Prospect Heights, Agnes is an activist who possesses a strong desire to obtain the greatest good for her community.

While living in Crown Heights where her son was raised, she became active in the parent associations and often served as president. Her leadership was rewarded and she became a member on the Executive Board of the city-wide United Parents Association and later the Board President.

As a parent leader, Agnes gained a reputation as an independent, outspoken voice for all children's entitlement to a quality education and parents' rights to participate in their education. Because of her advocacy, she was asked by leaders of the CSD 17 Presidents' Council to represent them in the race for a seat on Community School Board 17. With the collective energy of parents and community support, she was elected in 1983 and in every Board election thereafter, until the New York City School Board was dissolved in 2004.

As a first term Board member, Agnes surprised many by becoming President of the CSB 17 and held other officer and committee chair positions throughout her 17 years as an elected school official.

She was appointed by Mayor Edward I. Koch to serve on the newly created AIDS panel for school-aged children in August 1985. She was the first parent representative to serve during one of the most contentious periods in the City's public school history. The panel reviewed the medical status and family history of children diagnosed HIV positive.

The end of the School Board did not diminish Agnes' commitment to urging the improvement of public school education. She is a founding member of Black New Yorkers for Educational Excellence, a citywide progressive organization whose mission is to actively work for education as a means of liberation.

Agnes, an honor student throughout public school, was also Bushwick High School's first Black and first female to be elected President of the Student Government Association. Her college education began at Brooklyn College and formally ended at New York University where she majored in Broadcast Journalism and minored in English literature.

After attending NYU, Agnes was hired by WCBS Newsradio 88 where she worked for 19 years. She began as a News Desk Assistant

and quickly rose to Chief News Desk Assistant. Through her many years at WCBS Radio she won numerous awards.

Agnes is currently the producer and host of *Everyday People* and *Everyday Voices* aired monthly on Brooklyn Community Access Television.

Her passions include outdoor music concerts, jazz festivals, live theatrical productions, taking photos, and collecting Black memorabilia.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize this outstanding journalist for all of her work.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Agnes E. Green.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MAUREEN CLARK

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mrs. Maureen Clark for being awarded National Board Certification in Career and Technical Education Communication Arts by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Maureen is 1 of 2 educators at Foothill High School in Henderson, Nevada to become nationally certified. National Board Certification is a process that requires 1 to 3 years of preparation and testing. Maureen completed an extensive portfolio of assignments, essays, and videotapes as well as tests which assessed her knowledge of the individual subjects she teaches. Once obtaining National Board Certification, a teacher is given the highest honor of professional teaching excellence. Only 116 of more than 20,000 teachers in the Clark County School District, less than 1 percent, have earned this distinction.

Mrs. Clark has a long and distinguished career as an educator. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Art Education from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis and a Master's in Art Education from Northern Arizona University. She is an 18-year veteran teacher, teaching the last 7 years at Foothill High School. She currently teaches classes in Computer Graphics, Website Science, and Computer Graphic and 3D Animation. It is said that Mrs. Clark's classes are in high demand by Foothill students and her teaching approaches are described as innovative and exciting. After school, Mrs. Clark is the adviser for SkillsUSA, a club and national organization that prepares students for college by training them in technical, skilled, and service occupations. Under her advisement, SkillsUSA has competed and earned numerous state awards for its technology innovations. Maureen has made a profound difference in our community and we are most fortunate to have this leadership which positively impacts student achievement.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Maureen Clark. Her efforts to improve the

educational experiences of the student at Foothill High School are commendable. I congratulate her on her much deserved recognition and I wish her continued success.

A TRIBUTE TO LILLIAN ROBERTS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Ms. Lillian Roberts. Lillian Roberts is currently the Executive Director of District Council 37 of the AFSCME, AFL-CIO union. She represents 121,000 public workers in New York City, 50,000 of them retirees, 1,000 titles and 56 locals. She is also Vice President of the New York State AFL-CIO, Vice President of the NYC Central Labor Council and Secretary of the Municipal Labor Committee.

Lillian became a union activist as a Nurse's Aide working in a Chicago hospital in the 1950s. She spearheaded the creation of five locals and led an organizing drive at four Chicago hospitals.

Lillian came to New York City, built DC 37's hospital division and became Associate Director of DC 37. She distinguished herself by her skill as an organizer and her ability to connect with rank-and-file members. She established the DC 37 Education fund, the largest union-based adult education program in the country that offers union members a four-year degree with the College of New Rochelle. This program has become a model for unions nationwide.

During the late 1970s and 1980s, Lillian brought into the union thousands of workers in federally funded jobs. She found that experience to be a blueprint for creating unionized jobs for welfare recipients. She also developed the DC 37 Municipal Employees Legal Services program, which provides legal services to members and the DC 37 Personal Services Unit, which offers counseling to those with personal problems.

In 1981, Lillian became the first African-American woman named New York State Commissioner of Labor. During her 6-year tenure, she led the 7,500 employee body to increase the annual job placement level by 5 percent, obtained federal approval of a state plan for a Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Program, and computerized unemployment insurance offices and the Job Service program.

Lillian was first elected DC 37 Executive Director in 2002 after serving as consultant to the union she helped build. She was re-elected to a 3-year term in January of 2004. In January of 2007, Ms. Roberts was overwhelmingly re-elected for her 3rd term.

Lillian currently leads the union where she had been a previous Associate Director and consultant. In the 1960s and 1970s, she played a major role in organizing new members into DC 37 and establishing an array of

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

benefits that became the envy of the Nation's labor movement.

With housing costs rising, Lillian approached Mayor Bloomberg with a proposal to give DC 37 members and municipal workers an affordable way to meet the City's requirement that they live in the 5 boroughs. The result is the innovative DC 37 Affordable Housing Program. This program allows DC 37 members and city workers preference for 5 percent of units in city-sponsored lotteries for affordable homes and apartments, down payment grants through the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and homebuyer training and education through Neighborhood Housing Services.

Lillian's leadership is rooted in the lessons she learned while growing up on welfare on Chicago's South Side and fighting for better working conditions as a Nurse's Aide. Growing up as 1 of 5 siblings in conditions of poverty, she was instilled with a deep concern for the needy and a passion for fighting social injustices.

Lillian has been a member of numerous boards including: Board of Trustees of the College of New Rochelle; the State University of New York, the National Equal Rights Committee and the National Committee for Labor Israel.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize this labor activist for all of her accomplishments and her empathy for area workers.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Lillian Roberts.

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' HEALTH, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share my thoughts on H.R. 1591: the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act of 2007. After a great deal of reflection, I have decided to support this legislation. With today's vote, we are taking an important step toward ending the war in Iraq and bringing our troops home.

This legislation does not go far enough for me. I pushed for a vote on a course of action that would have gotten us out of Iraq much sooner and stipulated that all funding go toward drawing down troops. The House Rules Committee did not allow a vote on this position, and even if they had, I know that there are not enough votes to support it.

Today's vote was a very difficult one for me and I have been carefully weighing the impact of this legislation for weeks. In the final analysis, I decided that H.R. 1591 carried enough practical and symbolic weight that if it needed my vote to pass the House, then I should support it.

For me, the most important component of this legislation is that it stipulates the withdrawal of troops must begin no later than March 1, 2008 and be completed within 180 days. It also establishes specific benchmarks that the Iraqi government must meet, benchmarks that mirror the criteria President Bush himself set forth in his 2007 State of the Union

address. If real progress on these benchmarks is not made by July 1, 2007, then U.S. troop redeployment will begin immediately and must be completed within 180 days.

President Bush has been threatening to veto this bill for weeks and I fully expect he will do so if it reaches his desk in its current form. Regardless, the House is sending an important message to the President today by passing this legislation. In the weeks and months ahead, I will continue to do everything I can to end this war. There may not have been enough votes today to bring a faster end to this war, but there were enough to establish a date certain for withdrawal. With today's vote in the House we are closer than we have ever been to ending this war.

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' HEALTH, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1591, the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act.

In order to have an open and honest debate on the war in Iraq, we must differentiate between the situation that existed in Iraq when we first arrived there, and the situation that exists today. No longer do we find ourselves facing a united front, the clearly identifiable enemy of insurgents and Saddam loyalists. The current instability in Iraq has become a sectarian civil war, a war in which we have no business participating. We cannot use the parameters of a war that have since changed. We are not aiding the enemy in any way by setting reasonable, logical benchmarks, nor are we 'micromanaging' our war effort. The situation has changed, and so must the course we take.

This bill gives us the framework needed to focus our efforts on those who actually mean us harm, and extricate us from a situation in which we are nothing more than a police force, caught in the middle of a sectarian conflict. By committing to a gradual plan of benchmarks and a firm date of withdrawal, we create an environment in which the Iraqi people themselves become responsible for their future. No longer will they be reliant upon our presence to establish their own nation. The United States will be an important ally of the new Iraq, not an enforcer of the status quo in their nation.

I am also pleased that this bill includes several measures to aid our communities along the Gulf Coast. Waiving the local match requirements and forgiving Community Disaster Loans will help the city of New Orleans recover financially from the effects of Katrina. These financial troubles have since been compounded by the Administration's stubborn refusal to treat our disaster, the worst the Nation has ever seen, the same way that all others have been treated. For all previous localities receiving Community Disaster Loans, ranging from Hurricane Andrew to 9/11, 97 percent have been forgiven. This bill would take the long overdue step of forgiving the loans that

were extended to communities along the Gulf Coast. Free of this burden that has been unfairly put upon them, our communities can continue their extensive rebuilding efforts.

Our hurricane protection system, battered by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, is still not in the condition it was in before the storm. With hurricane season beginning again just a few months from now, we cannot afford to leave the city unprotected for another year. The money included in this bill for the Corps of Engineers ensures the safety of all citizens in the New Orleans area. The Corps should not be forced to delay action on critical hurricane protection projects because they lack the necessary funding. We have already seen the devastation that can be wrought by a hurricane; it is crucial that the Corps have the resources it needs to protect our city.

I also wish to highlight several other important programs within this bill whose importance cannot be overstated. We face a housing crisis in New Orleans, with public units drastically reduced in number, and no suitable plan for replacing such units in the short term. Eighty million dollars is provided in this bill for HUD tenant rental assistance so that our citizens can return home as soon as possible. Our elementary education system is in dire need of experienced teachers and administrators. Our colleges and universities were closed for months, and sustained significant physical damages. Sixty million dollars has been provided in this bill, and represents another step in the rejuvenation of our educational establishments. Additional funding for the Small Business Administration's disaster loan program has been provided, and is sorely needed for future disasters. The slow pace at which such loans were administered in the immediate months after Katrina was shameful, and by supporting this bill we have committed to ensure that it never happens again.

I urge my colleagues to support this supplemental appropriations bill, which provides everything needed by our troops in Iraq, while setting a course for our necessary disengagement. The people of this great country eloquently expressed their disapproval regarding the course of this war in the November elections and, on their behalf, we should do no less than heed their wishes.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOANN STRAND

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mrs. Joann Strand for being awarded National Board Certification in Adolescence and Young Adulthood Secondary Language Arts by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Joann is 1 of 2 educators at Foothill High School in Henderson, Nevada to become nationally certified. National Board Certification is a process that requires 1 to 3 years of preparation and testing. Mrs. Strand completed an extensive portfolio of assignments, essays, and videotapes as well as tests which assessed her knowledge of the individual subjects she teaches. Once obtaining National Board Certification, a teacher is given the