

“He was a pioneer in our foreign service and a driving force behind our membership in the OAS in 1967 and he ably performed the duties of Ambassador in Venezuela when we opened a mission in Caracas in 1974,” said King. “He was a mentor to many people. He was able to use his brilliance as a teacher to encourage many young diplomats to develop their careers in the area of representation.”

Less than four years ago at a ceremony in which he was being awarded the Order of Christopher Columbus by the Dominican Republic, Luigi R. Einaudi, at the time the OAS Assistant Secretary-General, described McComie as a visionary, who like Columbus “sailed uncharted waters, who came to harbors that became the ports and bridges of the future.” But it was Barbados’ Prime Minister, Owen Arthur, who best summed up McComie record, when he told the OAS General Assembly in Barbados in 2002 that “his contribution as an educator in Barbados and St. Kitts-Nevis helped to encourage many key decision-makers in newly independent states to become more aware of our Latin neighbors at a time when political contact could have been said to be almost non-existent.”

Little wonder, then, that the Barbados leader, speaking for the entire Caribbean told him “Val, we all owe you debt of gratitude for having the foresight of and appreciation for the value of cross-cultural contact.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JULIA CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2007*

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, on Monday, May 21, 2007, I was unable to vote on roll No. 384 and No. 385 as a result of my flight, US Airways #3088, being delayed 65 minutes. Had I been present, I would have voted “Yes” on both.

RECOGNIZING RAINDROP TURKEVI FOUNDATION

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2007*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of the Raindrop Turkevi Foundation of Dallas, TX.

As a non-profit, relatively new organization, the Raindrop Turkevi Foundation of Dallas is committed to facilitating common ground amongst diverse communities and assisting Turkish Americans in the Dallas area. The Foundation provides Turkish Americans with various resources in order for them to prosper socially and culturally.

In regard to education, the Raindrop Turkevi Foundation hosts various cultural scholarship opportunities and creates programs that benefit the Turkish-American Youth, such as K–12 and SAT tutoring, ESL classes, Turkish classes, and college advising. As for social development, the foundation holds conferences that promote diversity.

In collaboration with various local entities, the Raindrop Turkevi Foundation hosts meaningful events as well. It sponsors and cosponsors ethnic picnics and organizes athletic

events for children, such as weekly soccer games.

All in all, this organization’s benevolent objectives and current exploits make it an invaluable member to the Dallas area. The Raindrop Turkevi Foundation has playing an integral part in aiding the success of the Turkish American population and unionizing different communities in Texas.

On behalf of the 30th Congressional District of Texas, I am honored to recognize and commend Raindrop Turkevi of Dallas for accepting all ethnicities and for their leadership and hard work in the Dallas community as well as in the great State of Texas.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MIKE PENCE**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2007*

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote on May 21, 2007. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

Rollcall 384 (On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended—H.R. 698) “aye”; and

Rollcall 385 (On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass—H.R. 4096)—“aye.”

COPS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. DAVE WELDON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2007*

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, recently, the House considered legislation to reauthorize the Community Oriented Police, COPS, program. Unfortunately, this bill was brought up for consideration with no opportunity to amend and improve the bill. Rather than allowing an open discussion and amendment process, it was a take it or leave it choice that Members were given.

In reauthorizing this program little has been done to address the glaring shortcomings of the program as pointed out in audits by The Department of Justice Office of Inspector General, OIG, the Government Accountability Office, GAO, and other independent analyses—including one by the USA Today newspaper. Before tripling a program that the Office of Management and Budget has graded as “Not Performing: Results Not Demonstrated,” members should have been given an opportunity to consider amendments aimed at improving this bill. This is particularly important at a time when the size of the program is being tripled from an appropriation of about \$540 million in 2007 to nearly \$1.5 billion within 5 years.

These audits point out that New York City, the largest recipient of COPS funding—\$422 million—actually has 300 fewer officers today than they did before they received \$422 in Federal tax dollars. In 1994, New York City had 36,693 officers, yet by 2004 this had dropped by 321 officers to 36,372. The audit shows that Miami, while receiving over \$45 million, increased their police force by only 21 officers. That works out to over \$2 million per officer according to the audit.

Since the creation of this program in 1994, over \$13 billion has been spent on the COPS program. While some of that funding has been well spent, I am concerned that audits determined that, at a minimum, hundreds of millions of dollars were misspent. We have a responsibility to the taxpayers to make sure that the money that the Federal Government takes from them is not misspent.

Analyses showed that in spite of spending \$6 billion dollars in the first 6 years of the program, COPS fell short of placing 100,000 police on the streets. While the GAO found that the shortfall was about 12 percent, when you factor in historical hiring trends, the number of new police on the streets is far less. In fact, the Heritage Foundation analysis found when these historical police hiring trends are accounted for, the actual number of new police on the street nationwide is somewhere between 7,000 and 39,000—less than half of what was promised.

While the COPS grants were not supposed to supplant local funds, the U.S. Department of Justice OIG audit of expenditures found that grant recipients routinely supplanted local funding with COPS grants: simply allowing the Federal Government to pick up the tab for what they otherwise would have and should have paid for. The OIG audit of 147 high-risk grants found that 41 percent used the COPS grant to supplant local funds.

An investigative report by USA Today found in an audit of 3 percent of COPS grants that \$277 million was misspent and “tens of thousands of jobs funded by the grants were never filled, or weren’t filled for long.” This is particularly concerning given that my constituents, who happen to be net donors to this program, receive less than half of their equitable share of Federal COPS grants.

Finally, the purpose of the COPS program was to reduce crime. While many of the grant recipients saw a reduction in crime, a USA Today analysis found that crime fell at the same rates in communities that did not get COPS grants.

So, before we all embrace a bill that triples the size of this program, we should first make sure that we are being responsible with taxpayer dollars and getting the most out of every dollar. I am not sure the bill before us does that.

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 17, 2007*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1427) to reform the regulation of certain housing-related Government-sponsored enterprises, and for other purposes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, H.R. 1427 fails to address the core problems with the Government Sponsored Enterprises, GSEs. Furthermore, since this legislation creates new government programs that will further artificially increase the demand for housing, H.R. 1427 increases the economic damage that will occur from the bursting of the housing bubble.