

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, due to weather-related travel delays, I was absent from the House floor during Tuesday's rollcall votes on House Resolution 32 and H.R. 400.

Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of both measures.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING JOHN AND AUDREY BIRNEY ON RECEIVING THE HALL OF FARM AWARD

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, John and Audrey Birney are appreciated for their dedication and contributions to the Harrison County Farm Bureau; and

Whereas, the couple has had a positive impact on agriculture in Harrison County; and

Whereas, they have served their community on the P & E Committee; and

Whereas, John and Audrey Birney have gone above and beyond to be a spokesperson for agriculture; and

Whereas, John and Audrey Birney have served the organization and the community selflessly and tirelessly; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That along with their friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend John and Audrey Birney on their contributions to Harrison County's agriculture. Congratulations to John and Audrey Birney on receiving the Hall of Farm Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I was necessarily absent from the House on July 19, 2007. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on vote No. 684.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3648, MORTGAGE FORGIVENESS DEBT RELIEF ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3648, the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of 2007, a much-needed bill that will provide relief to homeowners facing foreclosure on their homes. I appreciate the leadership of the Ways and

Means Committee Chairman, CHARLIE RANGEL. I also applaud the Members from both sides of the aisle who are supporting this critical piece of legislation for homeowners. I cannot think of a more bipartisan issue than basic shelter.

It comes as a surprise to most Americans that when debt is forgiven by a lending institution in a foreclosure, that this amount must be included as income on their tax statement. In a time of rising foreclosures I cannot imagine anything more upsetting to a family than this scenario. The situation usually occurs when the family cannot pay their mortgage and then must give up their home. Then they must pay tax on phantom income when the lender forgives some part of the homeowner's mortgage.

In my home State of Ohio, the foreclosure epidemic went from bad to worse last year as the number of new cases grew by nearly 24 percent from 2005. Cuyahoga County led the state in new cases with 13,610 new filings last year. This ranking has attracted national attention with Ohio's foreclosure rate currently at 18 percent which is higher than the national average of 17 percent.

I must also point out that predatory lenders often target low-income and minority communities. Subprime loans are three times more likely in low-income neighborhoods than in high-income neighborhoods and five times more likely in minority neighborhoods than in white neighborhoods. This is an outrage.

Nothing is more symbolic of the American Dream than the ownership of our homes. Almost all of us dream of the day when we can have a place of our own. For most Americans, home ownership is the single biggest investment they will ever make. That is why the loss of one's home is also one of the most humiliating and debilitating experiences that anyone can go through. It is, at its core, an issue of humanity.

That is why I am pleased to rise in support of this piece of legislation that will allow taxpayers to exclude from their income debt that was forgiven by a financial institution or lender. We cannot sit by as a Congress and add insult to injury to our most vulnerable taxpayers.

Many of the homeowners in my district in Cleveland—which has some of the highest foreclosure rates in the Nation—need relief, not rhetoric. This is the same relief all Americans see and to which we must provide access. This bill provides some relief, but need I remind my colleagues that much more must be done on this front, and I look forward to working on other legislative initiatives that will help to address the plight of the American homeowner.

TROPICAL FOREST CONSERVATION ACT OF 1998 AMENDMENTS

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2185 to reauthorize and expand Rob Portman's landmark legislation, the Tropical Forest Conservation Act. This reauthorization will help developing countries reduce for-

eign debt and provide comprehensive environmental preservation programs to protect tropical forests and endangered marine habitats around the world.

Since enacted in 1998, Tropical Forest Conservation Act programs have generated a total of \$136.5 million over 10 to 25 years to help conserve 50 million acres of tropical forests in Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America. But the rate of deforestation continues to accelerate across the globe.

Similarly alarming is the rapid rate of coral reef and coastal exploitation. The burden of foreign debt falls especially hard on the smallest of nations, such as island nations in the Caribbean and Pacific. With few natural resources, these countries often resort to harvesting or otherwise exploiting coral reefs and other marine habitats to earn hard currency to service foreign debt. According to the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, 60 percent of the world's coral reefs may be destroyed by the year 2050 if the present rate of destruction continues.

The Tropical Forest and Coral Conservation Act expands the current tropical forest conservation programs to include the protection and conservation of these vital coral ecosystems. H.R. 2185 will credit qualified developing nations for each dollar spent on a comprehensive tropical forest and reef preservation or management programs. It will also reduce debt by investing locally in programs that will strengthen indigenous economies by creating long-term management policies to preserve the natural resources upon which local commerce is based. Most importantly, H.R. 2185 will make resources available for environmental stewardship that would otherwise be of the lowest priority in a developing country.

This legislation has enormous consequences for the existence of critical ecosystems, the health of our planet and the livelihoods of millions of people across the globe. I would like to thank Bill Millan from The Nature Conservancy, Lisa Handy from Conservation International, Beth Allgood from the World Wildlife Fund and Kelly Aylward from the Wildlife Conservation Society for all their efforts in helping to craft and forward this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support the Tropical Forest and Coral Conservation Act, which will help preserve the world's most precious natural resources.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE OPENING OF THE ORA E. ANDERSON NATURE TRAIL

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, the Ora E. Anderson Nature Trail at Rutherford Wetland in Wayne National Forest is being celebrated; and

Whereas, the trail is the first wildlife viewing trail accessible to all persons; and

Whereas, the trail is 1/2 mile long and sits on 20 acres on Athens Ranger District; and

Whereas, it will display poems completed by Ora E. Anderson and watercolor pictures completed by Barbara Sheriff Kostohryz; and

Whereas, the public will be educated on the Ora E. Anderson trail about wetland resources; be it

Resolved, That along with his friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I applaud the Ora E. Anderson Nature Trail and the awareness that it bring to our community.

HONORING DAVID SCHULZ

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor David Schulz, a devoted public servant, who passed away this week on October 7, 2007. As we mourn his early passing, we express our gratitude for the contributions that he made to Chicago as a public official and educator who was always committed to use his many talents to better his community.

Universally known as a charismatic, brilliant individual, Mr. Schulz was a man whose ambition and talents led him to hold an array of impressive positions in public service. After graduating from Purdue University with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, Dave devoted his next few years offering his talents to the communities of Milwaukee and Chicago, holding a series of transportation, public works and budget positions for local government agencies in both cities.

His unyielding devotion to his community paired with his gift of an exceptional intellect led him down a bright path, becoming Budget Director for Chicago and later holding the same position in Milwaukee. In 1988, Dave embarked on a new journey to give to the community through public office. As Milwaukee County Executive, Schulz prided himself on making significant contributions to the people of Milwaukee through building a county jail, upgrading Mitchell International Airport, and overhauling social services.

Schulz's other major achievements included his position as founding Executive Director of the Infrastructure Technology Institute at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Through his work with Northwestern, Schulz became known for his leadership and ability to bring faculty together to achieve a common goal. Dave contributed further to the academic community by passing on his extraordinary gifts of experience and knowledge to the students of Northwestern as an adjunct professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

Today I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the loss of David Schulz, a creative and dynamic individual who used his brilliance to contribute to the communities in which he lived and worked. I am grateful for his contributions and mourn the passing of a devoted public servant. Our thoughts, prayers, and deepest sympathies are with David Schulz's family and friends in this difficult time.

IN HONOR OF DR. DANIEL SIMMONS, PASTOR OF MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH, ALBANY, GA

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Daniel Simmons, on

the 16th anniversary of his being called to pastor historic Mount Zion Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia.

Dr. Simmons is a great many things to a great many people in his congregation, including myself. Since I joined Mount Zion in 1996, I have come to know him as a man of character, a humanitarian, a teacher, bridge builder, shepherd, and leader. Above all, Dr. Simmons, through his own humble and morally strong existence, helps us, as followers of the Word, stride toward the gift of fulfillment graciously bestowed upon us by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"Pastor Simmons," as we very fondly call him, leads over 2,000 parishioners who participate in over 50 ministry programs designed to fulfill the church's mission statement, "a vibrant church that reaches the world for Christ through evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, and missions," and to help individual spiritual development.

Growing up as one of twelve children of Mrs. Pinkie Norwood Simmons and the late Reverend Perry Simmons in the 1200-person community of Cairo, Georgia, Pastor Simmons seems to be the living embodiment of the familiar motto in Philippians 4:13—"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Through the grace of God, he was able to attend Albany State University and went on to receive a masters in rehabilitation counseling from the University of Georgia, and a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Bethany Theological Seminary.

Before being called to pastor at Mount Zion, Pastor Simmons received his license to preach Greater Second Mount Olive Baptist Church of Albany, and pastored at Mountain Grove Baptist Church of Dawson, Georgia, and Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Sylvester, Georgia.

Madam Speaker, Mount Zion Baptist Church, the city of Albany, and indeed the Second Congressional District of Georgia have been truly blessed to have benefited from the tremendous leadership and teachings of Pastor Simmons for the past 16 years. May our community and our country continue to be blessed by the visionary ministry of Jesus Christ that manifests itself in the exceptional service of my pastor and friend, Dr. Daniel Simmons.

TRIBUTE TO RABBI MARK
STEPHEN MILLER

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Rabbi Mark Stephen Miller, in honor of his 60th birthday, which occurred on October 5, 2007. For over 30 years, Rabbi Miller has served his Newport Beach congregation, Temple Bat Yahm, with distinction, setting a standard of excellence as a teacher, counselor, and spiritual leader.

Rabbi Miller has worked tirelessly to promote tolerance and understanding, and he continues to be an exceptional role model for young people. I consider myself fortunate to have been the benefactor of Rabbi Miller's kind heart and understanding and my family remain proud members of his congregation. I

am also thankful that Rabbi Miller was able to participate in my wedding ceremony.

Rabbi Miller was ordained from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati in 1974, and in 1999 he received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Hebrew Union College. He joined Temple Bat Yahm in 1977 as its rabbi following a short time as assistant rabbi at Temple Sinai in Roslyn Heights, New York where he met his bride of 30 years, Wendy. Together they raised five wonderful children. During his tenure at Temple Bat Yahm the congregation has grown from one hundred plus families to approximately six hundred families, and its facility has moved from a one room portable classroom to a sprawling campus which includes a beautiful sanctuary, classrooms, social halls, an intimate chapel and a wonderful amphitheatre for outdoor services.

Rabbi Miller is a renowned lecturer on business ethics, bioethics, tolerance and interfaith relations. He spent over 20 years as a guest lecturer at University of California, Irvine and now teaches regularly at Chapman University. His commanding presence on the pulpit and dramatic storytelling and lecturing style is well known and respected.

Rabbi Miller has been recognized by the United States Congress before. He has given the invocation to both the House of Representatives and the Senate, where he once served as an aide to Senator Walter Mondale. An avid baseball fan and diehard Chicago Cubs fan, Rabbi Miller was similarly honored by also giving the invocation at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY for its annual induction ceremony. It is most fitting that he was born on the same day as one of baseball's most remembered plays, Al Gionfriddo's game-saving World Series catch.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Rabbi Mark Stephen Miller on this significant birthday and for his many years of dedicated service to his family, congregation, community and faith. He is a shining light to us all.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING ALBERT AND ELSIE SCHRADER ON THEIR 60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Mr. and Mrs. Schrader will celebrate 60 delightful years of marriage together; and

Whereas, they will reflect on October 5, 1947 with great joy and fondness; and

Whereas, Albert and Elsie have been a symbol of love, dedication and loyalty for all to be in awe of; and

Whereas, Mr. and Mrs. Schrader reminisce on a lifetime full of memories and look forward to many more together; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That along with her friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I wish Mr. and Mrs. Albert and Elsie Schrader a happy 60th anniversary. We recognize the tremendous impact they have had in their family and in the lives of all those people they have touched.