

IN RECOGNITION OF JAVIER LOPEZ, M.D., F.A.C.S. UPON HIS INDUCTION INTO THE SAINT VINCENT CHARITY HOSPITAL'S SOCIETY OF SAINT LUKE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 5, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of my dear friend and mentor, Javier Lopez, M.D., upon his induction into St. Vincent Charity Hospital's Society of Saint Luke, an honor that reflects his immeasurable contribution to the health and well-being of countless individuals and families, from Cleveland, Ohio to Colombia, South America. His compassion and expertise continues to have the greatest impact on the poor of our community, whose lives are uplifted, inspired and made whole again by the healing compassion that defines the life and work of Dr. Javier Lopez.

A highly skilled surgeon and general family practitioner in the Cleveland area for more than 40 years, Dr. Lopez's brilliant medical expertise is equaled by his patience, caring, compassion, and dedication to every patient, regardless of their ability to pay. More than forty years ago, Dr. Lopez journeyed from his beautiful homeland of Medellin, Colombia, to Cleveland, Ohio, to complete his residency at St. Alexis Hospital. The people of North and South Broadway, including myself and my family, were immediately taken by his kind, gentle and humble nature. Dr. Lopez's talent as a gifted doctor could have landed him a successful medical practice in any wealthy suburb, yet he chose to stay in the inner city, on Broadway Avenue, wholly dedicated to treating those who embraced him as a young man so many years ago.

I have been fortunate to have known Dr. Lopez since I was a young man, and even more fortunate to have cultivated a close friendship with him. The positive impact that he has had on my life and the lives of so many others is truly indescribable in mere words. His excellence as a physician is surpassed by none, yet it is his deep sense of humanity that sets him apart from most others. Dr. Lopez continues to be a guiding beacon of hope along Broadway Avenue, uplifting the spirits, hearts and lives of countless individuals, including my own.

Dr. Lopez lives his life dedicated to his faith, his family, and the communities of North and South Broadway and St. Vincent's. His vocation in medicine reflects his unwavering faith and is captured in the biblical reference: "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto me." Dr. Lopez offers the same compassion, concern and medical expertise to the forgotten homeless man as he does to the successful attorney. Despite his great achievements in the field of medicine, Dr. Lopez's sense of humanity has always been blind to social or economic status.

Although Dr. Lopez has wholly embraced his Cleveland community, he never forgets the struggles of the people of his Colombian birthplace. An international ambassador of healing, Dr. Lopez continues to lead regular medical missions to Colombia and Honduras, where he donates his time, expertise, medicine and medical supplies to war-torn and impoverished

communities, forging healing, peace and hope for a better day. In Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Lopez's lifelong commitment to healing is reflected every day within his modest medical office on Broadway Avenue.

His office still remains across the street from where St. Alexis Hospital once stood, and in 2003, Dr. Lopez became an integral member of the medical staff of St. Vincent Charity Hospital. He immediately garnered the respect, admiration and adoration of St. Vincent Hospital staff members and patients—everyone from the front desk receptionists to the nurses and surgical specialists.

Madam Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Dr. Javier Lopez, upon his induction into the Society of Saint Luke. Dr. Lopez' medical insight, intellect, grace, wisdom, leadership and friendship—and above all else, his compassion, kindness and heart, continues to raise the lives of so many of us onto a platform of hope, survival, peace and healing.

Dr. Lopez strengthens our entire community by caring for us, and by caring, especially—"for the least of us." I am grateful and honored to call Dr. Lopez my friend, and I thank him for enriching my life by his close and consistent presence in it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 5, 2007

Mrs. MYRICK. Madam Speaker, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present on November 1, 2007, I would have voted as follows: rollcall vote 1032, on motion to recommit with instructions—H.R. 2262, the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act—I would have voted "aye"; rollcall vote 1033, on passage—H.R. 2262, the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act—I would have voted "nay."

INTRODUCTION OF THE SAFE AND HEALTHY EMERGENCY HOUSING ACT OF 2007

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 5, 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Safe and Healthy Emergency Housing Act, which underscores the Federal Government's obligation to provide safe emergency housing units to disaster victims during times of need.

I am glad to be joined today in introducing this bill by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response, HENRY CUELLAR from Texas, and Representative GENE TAYLOR, who knows firsthand the importance of providing adequate housing to disaster victims.

I would also like to thank Representatives CLARKE, JACKSON LEE, CHRISTENSEN, LOFGREN, and AL GREEN for signing on as original cosponsors.

Nearly 2½ years after Hurricane Katrina, we are still learning how we can improve our abil-

ity to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. The lessons we have learned cannot be ignored.

One of the most striking lessons we learned was that this country was ill-prepared to provide emergency housing to victims during a major catastrophe.

To house the number of individuals who lost their homes during Katrina and Rita, FEMA was forced to immediately purchase thousands of travel trailers. By the time the dust settled, FEMA had purchased over 100,000 of these units.

At the time, travel trailers appeared to be a logical choice because they can be produced much faster than other housing alternatives. However, as time passed, it became clear that travel trailers may not have been the best option.

By now, most of us are well aware that many of the travel trailers provided by FEMA were and remain contaminated with formaldehyde. Many of us, however, do not know why this happened.

Tests conducted in 2006 found that the formaldehyde levels in most of the trailers tested exceeded the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended limit. It's also important to note that formaldehyde is classified as a carcinogen by the International Agency for Research of Cancer.

I have continually raised concerns over the health impacts of formaldehyde exposure with the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC.

My Committee staff has also interviewed medical officials from the CDC Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry about a February 2007 report that focused on formaldehyde levels present in FEMA trailers. However, the study did not analyze the potential health impacts on travel trailers' residents.

After expressing my deep concerns with the DHS chief medical officer over the lack of such a study, FEMA announced that they would be entering into an agreement with the CDC to test the trailers for formaldehyde and to study what associated health impacts may have been encountered.

I anxiously await the results of this important study.

Madam Speaker, as you may know, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, regulates formaldehyde emissions in manufactured housing. However, travel trailers are not considered to be "manufactured housing," and are, therefore, exempt from this regulation.

This legislation protects disaster victims by requiring that any emergency housing units provided by FEMA meet HUD regulations limiting formaldehyde emissions.

This legislation does not force the travel trailer industry to change the way they manufacture their product, it simply makes certain that FEMA will no longer provide formaldehyde-contaminated housing units to disaster victims.

While the health implications are still being studied, we do know that research has proven that the negative health effects can range anywhere from respiratory irritation to cancer. According to medical experts, the health impacts are most concerning for children whose lungs are still developing.

In closing Madam Speaker, let me say that our citizens' health should be a top priority