

EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of Equal Pay Day, which was yesterday, April 22, 2008. Equal Pay Day was originated by the National Committee on Pay Equity in 1996 as a public awareness event to illustrate the gap between men's and women's wages. The day, observed on a Tuesday in April, symbolizes how far into the year a woman must work, on average, to earn as much as a man earned the previous year. Because women earn less, on average, than men, they must work longer for the same amount of pay. In other words, the average American woman must work 16 months to earn what a man did in 12. The wage gap is even greater for most women of color.

President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law in 1963, but the wage gap between men and women has been closing at a very slow rate. In 1963, women who worked full-time, year-round made 59 cents on average for every dollar earned by men. In 2006, women earned 77 cents to the dollar.

The wage gap exists, in part, because many women and people of color are still segregated into a few low-paying occupations. More than half of all women workers hold sales, clerical and service jobs. Studies show that the more an occupation is dominated by women or people of color, the less it pays. Part of the wage gap results from differences in education, experience or time in the workforce. But a significant portion cannot be explained by any of those factors; it is attributable to discrimination. In other words, certain jobs pay less because they are held by women and people of color.

Democrats are taking action to address the wage gap. The House has already passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which restores basic protections against pay discrimination by rectifying the May 2007 Ledbetter v. Goodyear Supreme Court decision that overturned precedent and made it much more difficult for workers to pursue pay discrimination claims. The Senate is scheduled to consider this legislation this week. The House is also considering the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 by providing more effective remedies to women who are not being paid equal wages for doing equal work. I strongly support both of these measures.

Equal pay is not simply a women's issue, but a family issue. The wage gap hurts everyone—husbands, wives, children, and parents—because it lowers family incomes that pay for essentials: groceries, energy bills, doctors' visits and child care. Furthermore, 41 percent of women supply their families' sole source of income.

It is estimated that if we do nothing, it will take until 2057 to close the pay gap. To force women and their families to wait nearly another 50 years to receive equal pay for equal work is absolutely unacceptable. I pledge to continue the fight for pay equity until all Americans, regardless of gender or race, receive equal pay for equal work.

HONORING THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OF REVEREND WALT PARRY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the distinguished public service of Reverend Walt Parry, of Fresno, California. After nearly 25 years with the non-profit organization Fresno Metro Ministry where Reverend Parry succeeded in serving the needs of the local community, he retired this past January.

During his tenure at the Fresno Metro Ministry, Reverend Parry aided thousands of deserving local residents with his passion for excellence and strong ethical drive. I have had the pleasure of working with him frequently and his dedication to the community is to be commended, especially in the areas of public health, cultural diversity and disadvantaged advocacy.

Reverend Parry was instrumental in the creation of the Community Food Bank, an organization that helps distribute food to people in need throughout California's Central Valley. Healthy nutrition was a paramount concern for the Reverend, who both fought against the obesity epidemic as well as the lack of nourishment in the area. Other notable achievements of Reverend Parry include better access to healthcare, clean air, improved nutrition, and a deep respect for multiculturalism in our Valley communities.

Throughout his career in the area, Reverend Walt Parry has proven to be a highly effective administrator who was always committed to excellence in public service. As he gets ready to spend much more time enjoying retirement as well as supporting the social causes he is passionate about on a more personal level, I wish him continued success and best of luck for the future.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 322, recognizing the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel and reaffirming the bonds of close friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel. I would like to thank my distinguished colleague from California, Speaker of the House, Representative NANCY PELOSI and Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative HOWARD BERMAN for their leadership on this important issue.

Today, Israel celebrates its 60th birthday, or its Day of Independence. This is a very special day for this country, where citizens live in a constant state of unknown, but are united for their love for the state. In addition to birthday greetings, I want to wish Israel the best of luck in its continued attempts to make peace this upcoming year.

Israel was created in 1948; it took President Truman only 11 minutes to recognize the new Jewish State. Since then, it has come to exist as the only true democracy in the Middle East. Israel and the United States have many of the same foundations of government: Freedom of religion, free speech, basic human rights, the rule of law and being a nation of immigration and diversity. Israel has provided a unique opportunity for Jews from all over the world to reestablish their ancient homeland. In addition, it is a home to many religious sites which are sacred to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and attracts visitors every year.

Israel provided a refuge to Jews who survived the horrors of the Holocaust and the evils committed by the Nazis which were unprecedented in human history. The people of Israel have established a unique, pluralistic democracy which includes the freedoms cherished by the people of the United States, including freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of the press, and government by the consent of the governed.

Israel continues to serve as a shining model of democratic values by regularly holding free and fair elections, promoting the free exchange of ideas, and vigorously exercising in its Parliament, the Knesset, a democratic government that is fully representative of its citizens.

I want to applaud the Government of Israel for successfully working with the neighboring Governments of Egypt and Jordan to establish peaceful, bilateral relations. I have had the privilege of visiting Israel, and hearing firsthand how the government is taking great strides to ensure peace for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, this important legislation recognizes the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel and reaffirms the bonds of close friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel. I am proud to join 201 of my colleagues in cosponsoring this important legislation. For these reasons, I support H. Con. Res. 322 and urge all Members to do the same. The United States and Israel enjoy a strategic partnership based on shared mutual democratic values, friendship, and respect. The people of the United States share affinity with the people of Israel and view Israel as a strong and trusted ally. I hope this friendship continues to grow and blossom for decades to come, as Israel settles itself in a firm place on our global map.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I support the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week. National Public Works Week is celebrated for a full week each May to celebrate our public works professionals and the important work they do to keep our country running smoothly.

May 18 through 24, 2008 will recognize the many duties that public works professionals—those who design, build, operate, maintain and

protect transportation systems, water supply infrastructure, sewage and refuse disposal systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities—perform to enhance communities and our Nation.

Public works keep our society functioning: providing buildings that house vital government offices, and giving our country rail, highways, airports, and public transit to move goods and passengers.

Similarly, public works help maintain public health: Providing systems for waste and sewage disposal, while supplying us with crucial water for our homes, businesses, and agriculture. Pipelines safely transport natural gas and hazardous liquids through 2,300,000 miles of pipelines throughout the country.

Many people take for granted our public works, recognizing their importance only when problems are encountered. When water supply is not efficient, when infrastructure crumbles, and when accidents in moving transportation occur, we are then forced to reflect on what needs to be invested in the larger public works sector of our economy.

The “2006 Status of the Nation’s Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions and Performance” report by the Department of Transportation confirms that investment in the Nation’s highway, bridge, and transit infrastructure has not kept up with the growing demands of the system.

Likewise, our country is in need of critical investment in water infrastructure. It was more than 1 year ago, at the beginning of the 110th Congress, that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure passed three key water infrastructure bills: H.R. 569, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007; H.R. 700, the Health Communities Water Supply Act of 2007; and H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007. These bills later overwhelmingly passed the House, and we continue to wait for our counterparts in the Senate to take similar action.

I strongly support investment in our Nation’s infrastructure, as well as the men and women who keep our public works, quite simply, working.

HONORING THE LOUISIANA
HONORAIR VETERANS

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor a very special group from South Louisiana.

On April 26, 2008 a group of 100 veterans and their guardians will fly to Washington with a very special program. Louisiana HonorAir is providing the opportunity for these veterans from my home state of Louisiana to visit Washington, DC on a chartered flight free of charge. During their visit, they will visit Arlington National Cemetery and the World War II Memorial. For many, this will be their first and only opportunity to see these sights dedicated to the great service they have provided for our Nation.

Today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these great Americans and thanking them for their unselfish service.

PROTECTING THE MEDICAID
SAFETY NET ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5613, Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act of 2008.

I believe that any society can be judged on how they treat the most vulnerable—namely seniors, children and the disabled.

This measure places a 1-year moratorium on Medicaid regulations and cuts put forward unilaterally by the administration that could have a devastating effect on each of those groups.

Some of these cuts would slash access to rehabilitation services, decrease services for foster care and abused children, limit services to the elderly, and persons with developmental disabilities.

In fact, these cuts could have a disastrous impact in Michigan on the 21,000 developmentally disabled and 27,000 children with medical conditions—the very people who need our help the most.

With Michigan’s struggling economy, the high price of gas and home heating, and an overall increase in cost of living, many families need access to these services.

The proposed cuts to the Medicaid program have the potential to cost the State of Michigan over 15,000 jobs and the loss of \$732 million dollars in Federal funding in the first year alone. And it’s set to get worse over the next 5 years resulting in an estimated \$3.9 billion in Federal cuts.

Delaying these draconian cuts for 1 year will give Congress the opportunity to work together on these issues so that we can better serve those in need across our Nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN “JACK”
J. WALSH, JR. FOR OVER 35
YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE
TO THE GLAZIERS AND GLASS-
WORKERS LOCAL 1044 OF BOSTON

SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of a man whose professional life has been dedicated to the skill of his trade and commitment to his fellow union members. John “Jack” J. Walsh, Jr. is a remarkable individual with a long and illustrious career in the Glaziers and Glassworkers Local 1044 of Boston, Massachusetts.

Jack joined the Glaziers and Glassworkers Union on March 12, 1973. Throughout his tenure with Local 1044, Jack always exhibited a commitment to excellence in his trade and dedication to ensuring the welfare of his fellow union members.

Jack has been equally dedicated to serving his local community. Notably, Jack served as a Boy Scout Troop Leader and is currently a

member of both the Weymouth Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 2899 and the Loyal Order of Moose in Braintree.

Despite his various accomplishments, Jack has always taken the greatest pride in his roles as a devoted husband and father. For the past 32 years, Jack has had the enormous pleasure and tremendous good fortune of being married to his beloved wife, Patty, and together, they are the proud and loving parents of Jonathan and Gregory.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the Floor of the House today to join with Jack Walsh’s family, friends and Brothers and Sisters of Labor to thank him for over 35 years of remarkable service to the American Labor Movement. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating Jack’s distinguished career and wishing him good health and God’s blessing in all his future endeavors.

THE 93RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 93rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Our voices, as well as those of Armenian-Americans across the nation, are essential in the effort to bring needed attention to such a historic tragedy. The Armenian-American community has made tremendous contributions to our country, and their efforts and passion will help ensure that those who lost their lives will not be forgotten.

Today, we pay tribute to the memory of those who died, reflect on all those who have suffered from such prejudice, and vow to raise awareness so that such an atrocity never occurs again. As a member of the Armenian Caucus and a cosponsor of the genocide resolution, I will keep fighting to ensure that the Armenian Genocide is appropriately recognized.

It is a shame that we have not learned from our mistakes in the past regarding genocide, but it is not too late to heal these wounds and also help end atrocities occurring as we speak. With the Olympics taking place this year, it is my hope that all nations can come together and play a constructive role in ending violence in places like Darfur. In the spirit of the Olympics, we must come together as one and make clear that we all stand with the world against genocide and human rights abuses. It is our duty to end this human suffering, and I will continue to work with my colleagues in Washington, DC, to promote healing and peace throughout the world.

I am also very proud that my fellow Rhode Islanders have been actively involved in calling attention to this issue, and I urge them to continue to make their voices heard. As an ardent supporter of Rhode Island’s Armenian-American community throughout my public service career, I join my colleagues today in honoring the victims of the genocide by paying tribute to their memory, showing compassion for those who have suffered from such prejudice, and never forgetting the pain that they have endured.