

ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND  
HERSELF FROM ATTACK**HON. JEB HENSARLING**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2009*

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, as a Member of Congress it is a high honor to cast my vote in the people's House. In my career, I have exercised that privilege over 4,200 times. While my record is not perfect, I am proud that last year I participated in 99 percent of all votes.

That is all the more reason why I am filled with regret that I unintentionally missed my opportunity to cast a vote last Friday on Rollcall No. 10, the resolution recognizing Israel's right to defend herself against attacks from Gaza. As a longtime supporter of Israel and her right to exist, I want to inform the House that were I present for the vote, I would have voted in favor of this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, I offer my strong support of Israel and H. Res. 34. Since the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza in 2005, Hamas has continually launched thousands of rockets into southern Israel, killing innocent civilians, destroying vital infrastructure and private property, and holding hostage virtually all southern Israel's residents.

Though the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire of June 2008 reduced the number of rocket attacks from Gaza, the attacks never fully ended. Instead, Hamas and its foreign allies used this opportunity to smuggle more weapons into the region. Once the ceasefire expired on December 19, 2008, Hamas resumed its daily attacks on Israel with increased ferocity using its new and improved longer range Iranian-made rockets smuggled in during the ceasefire. Israel was left with little choice but to retaliate against these attacks by targeting Hamas' military forces and weapons stockpiles.

While any loss of life is deplorable, the fact remains that it was Hamas who forced Israel to resort to a military solution. Thus, I offer Israel my full support in the efforts to protect her citizens. If America fell under the same daily barrage of rocket attacks, we would not hesitate to strike back with military force, nor would we seek permission to take the necessary steps to protect our citizens.

Madam Speaker, Israel has a legal, moral, and historical right to exist in peace with secure and defensible borders. While it is my earnest prayer that this current conflict may be resolved shortly through a durable and sustainable ceasefire, Israel cannot put at risk the security of her people by allowing Hamas to continue to export violence from Gaza.

The loss of innocent civilian life is tragic and it is deplorable that Hamas complicates Israel's attempts to avoid civilian casualties by stockpiling weapons in homes and in mosques and using public places like schools to launch their sinister attacks on Israel. The Palestinian people deserve better.

Peace can never be achieved so long as terrorist groups like Hamas continue to operate. Israel has been our staunchest ally in the Middle East and a full partner in the global war against radical jihadists—individuals who would destroy our Nation, our children, our values, and the very existence of Western civilization. We must continue to support Israel's

right to defend herself against those who seek to destroy her and continue to support efforts to bring a lasting peace between Israel and her neighbors.

Madam Speaker, I support H. Res. 34 and Israel's right to defend herself from attack.

AFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT  
TOWARDS THE STATE OF ISRAEL**HON. TRAVIS W. CHILDERS**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2009*

Mr. CHILDERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to affirm that Hamas's continued and violent attacks against Israel have again undermined the potential for peace under already tenuous conditions, harming both Palestinians and Israeli civilians in an unprovoked assault. I join many of my fellow Americans in calling for Hamas to end its attacks, recognize Israel's right to exist, dismantle its terrorist infrastructure, and accept previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians. I was proud to vote last week with a bipartisan majority of my colleagues in support of H. Res. 34, expressing our continued commitment to the welfare and survival of Israel, and recognizing its right to act in self-defense.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE  
PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION  
ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

**HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 14, 2009*

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009. This bill represents a strong bipartisan first step to reform our broken health care system by guaranteeing that millions of uninsured children will have the health care that they need. Its passage will bring a symbolic end to the broken promises of the Bush Administration, which twice chose to deny coverage to 4 million children in desperate need of health care.

Over the past decade the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) has helped reduce the number of uninsured children by one-third and has made significant progress in improving the health of low-income children. H.R. 2 will reauthorize this critical program until 2013, ensuring that 7 million children currently covered by SCHIP continue to receive health coverage. Equally as important, this bill will extend health coverage to an additional 4 million low-income children who are currently uninsured.

The Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 strengthens SCHIP by including incentives for states to develop effective outreach and enroll more eligible children. In addition, the bill improves access to both mental health services and dental health care, and offers states the option to cover targeted low-income pregnant women as a way to provide the essential prenatal care that can help reduce birth defects.

I am particularly grateful that our leadership has chosen to include the provisions of the Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act in this SCHIP reauthorization. This provision will restore the states' option to provide coverage to legal immigrant children who meet all other eligibility criteria, thereby seizing the opportunity to address health disparities in communities of color that historically have had very poor access to health care.

Madam Speaker, I believe this bill takes a giant step forward in honoring our moral imperative to ensure that age, race and income do not determine the health status of our children. I am proud to vote for its passage today, to protect our commitment to our children, and to offer them the promise of a healthier tomorrow.

## HONORING MARY ANN RIOJAS

**HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2009*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleagues, Representative JIM COSTA and Representative DEVIN NUNES, to commend and congratulate Mary Ann Riojas upon being selected by ABC's reality television show, "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." Ms. Riojas and her family were surprised by Ty Pennington and his crew on January 8, 2009 at their home in Fresno, CA.

Mary Ann Riojas was born without legs and with only one fully developed arm. As a child, Ms. Riojas was placed into the foster care system, and was faced with an unstable home life. She began to gain her independence when she was introduced into the Easter Seals program and they provided her with her first wheelchair. With this wheelchair she was able to attend Easter Seals Camp Harmon in the Santa Cruz Mountains. At Camp Harmon she learned how to swim and was able to participate in camp activities. The summer camp program provided her an opportunity to meet new people, try new things and continue to gain her independence.

As a young adult, Ms. Riojas decided to stay at home and raise her four children. For a short time she was receiving public assistance to keep her family afloat. In spite of her disabilities, and financial struggle, she was determined to become the first in her family to earn a college degree; she graduated in 2002 from San Joaquin Valley College with an Associate of Arts degree in business administration. To further her independence, she obtained her drivers license, and with the assistance of Easter Seals, she purchased her first fully-equipped, hand-controlled vehicle.

When she was unable to find a job because of her disabilities, Ms. Riojas became an employee of Easter Seals. Her first job was as the office manager at the Child Development Center at Children's Hospital Central California. In 2005, she became the National Ambassador for Easter Seals and travelled all over the country spreading her joy and enthusiasm for life. Ms. Riojas eventually changed jobs, and in 2006, she began working for the Fresno Housing Authority as a counselor. This position has allowed her to assist families in her community that are facing housing and financial problems.