

Known to his many friends as Charlie, he was a native of Leeds and was raised in the Chickasaw, Alabama. He served the city of Saraland in public office for almost three decades, 12 years as mayor and 17 as city councilman. In 2008, he ran unopposed in the municipal election.

Mayor Harben was known as a fiscal conservative. Economic development was one of his top priorities, and he was instrumental in attracting business to Saraland, including the city's largest, Wal-Mart.

Mayor Harben also worked for the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad as a secretary, accountant, and an internal auditor, before retiring after 48 years of service.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a beloved friend to many throughout southwest Alabama. Charles William Harben will be dearly missed by his family—his wife of 57 years, Pauline; their son, Charles William Jr.; their grandchildren, Christian, Candice, and Jon; his great-granddaughter, Hayzlynn; and his brother, Johnny—as well as the countless friends he leaves behind.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them all during this difficult time.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR
HOMES ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in reluctant support of S. 986, the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act. Although I supported H.R. 1106 earlier in this Congress, and I will vote for this bill, I remain concerned about many aspects that attempt to fix the problem without addressing the fundamental issues.

S. 896 makes additional changes to the HOPE for Homeowners program despite evidence that it is a seriously flawed model that has failed to effect the type of large-scale mortgage modification that our economy needs if it is going to recover. Despite the changes made, success of the HOPE for Homeowners program continues to be contingent on the active participation of the mortgage lender or mortgage servicer. Once again, we throw money at Wall Street—at the bankers and lenders—and leave individuals and families with nothing.

The bill also reauthorizes programs under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. I am grateful that the plight of the homeless and the growing homeless population has finally merited the attention of Congress; however I am dismayed by some of the provisions in the final bill as well as the process used to arrive at the terms of the relevant language. The problem of homelessness in this country deserves more attention in the House of Representatives than a mere fraction of debate time on a suspension bill. If we had more time and different circumstances, we might have had the opportunity to correct some of the privacy concerns as well as the provisions that limit eligible uses of funds.

Despite the shortcomings in this bill, it represents a small step in the right direction on

the whole. I remain hopeful that Congress will continue to improve the HOPE for Homeowners programs as well as the plight of the growing numbers of homeless citizens. In the end, we must adopt a default posture that accommodates communities, families, and individuals, rather than a default posture that accommodates bankers and financial institutions. Only then will we be able to repair our economy and put our country back on a path of prosperity and growth.

DAVIS FAMILY OF TELlico
PLAINS, TENNESSEE

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, there is perhaps no greater sacrifice an American can make than serving their Country during a time of war, and no one can say the Davis family of Tellico Plains, Tennessee has not answered this call. It is a tradition which spans over ninety years.

Private Hedrick Davis enlisted in the Army's Black Cat Division during World War I. After returning home, he bought a farm, married, and had five sons, who would all go on to answer that same call to service.

Four of the Davis sons—Leonard, Dillard, Clarence, and Guy—joined the Armed Forces as soon as World War II began. All the brothers would fight for their Country and despite the tremendous loss of life in this great campaign, all would remarkably live to tell their tales.

Dillard's story is one that took over fifty years to confirm. While on board the Belgian Troop ship the Leopoldville crossing the English Channel on Christmas Eve, a German Submarine attacked, sinking the boat with a torpedo. In a series of calamities following the strike and a botched rescue, 763 American soldiers died. Dillard managed to survive and tell the tale that the United States and Great Britain did not admit until the 1990s.

The fifth Davis brother—Rex—was only sixteen-years-old when World War II ended. But he would not be spared from his family's calling. When the Korean conflict escalated into a full-blown war, Rex Davis answered the call. His tale was one of Hollywood legend—literally.

While training at Fort Benning, GA, movie stars Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis filmed the movie "Jumping Jack" on base, using Rex and his fellow soldiers as extras. Later, while serving in Korea, another movie star—Patricia Neal—came to entertain the troops. She asked on stage if anyone was from Knoxville and Rex jumped right up, getting his photo taken on stage with Ms. Neal. It is a cherished photograph that in 2003 brought Ms. Neal to tears in Knoxville when she was unexpectedly reunited with Rex.

In his Knoxville home, Rex Davis has files of records documenting the service of his father and four brothers, who together fought and survived three wars. Rex went on to serve on the Knoxville City Council, and he is known to tell a great story. I hope this story is told many times.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to call the remarkable service of Private Hedrick

Davis, Master Sgt. Leonard Davis, Staff Sgt. Dillard Davis, Cpl. Clarence Davis, Pfc. Guy Davis, and Cpl. Rex Davis to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. JAMES R.
RECKNER

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize Dr. James R. Reckner for his dedication to the Vietnam Center and Archive at Texas Tech University. Dr. Reckner retired from Texas Tech University at the end of 2008 after 20 years of service as a professor of history, founding director of the Vietnam Center and Archive, and Executive Director of Texas Tech's new Institute for Modern Conflict, Diplomacy and Reconciliation, which now oversees the Vietnam Center and Archive.

A retired Naval officer and a veteran of the Vietnam War, Dr. Reckner received his Ph.D. from the University of Auckland in New Zealand. He joined the faculty at Texas Tech in September of 1988 and shortly after founded the Vietnam Center and Archive. From 1991 to 1992, Dr. Reckner held the Secretary of the Navy's Research Chair in Naval History and has served as a member of the Secretary's Advisory Subcommittee on Naval History since 1998.

As founder and director of the Vietnam Center and Archive, Dr. Reckner oversaw 20 years of development and growth including the acquisition of many unique and historic collections that have helped us better understand the experience and course of the Vietnam War. As a result of his leadership, the Center has become the foremost Vietnam-related research, archival and reconciliation institution in the United States.

During his years in the United States Navy, Dr. Reckner received the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V", the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V", the Meritorious Service Medal and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

For his work in academia, Dr. Reckner also received the Gold Key National Honor Society Teaching Award in 1991, the President's Outstanding Leadership Award in 1996 and the Faculty Distinguished Leadership Award in 2004, among others. Not only is he an inspiring educator and skilled researcher, but he is an accomplished author as well with several published writings on naval and military history. In 1989, he received the Theodore & Franklin D. Roosevelt Annual Naval History Award for his historical biography entitled Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet.

I am enormously appreciative to Dr. Reckner for his contributions to the Texas Tech community, veterans of the Vietnam War and their families, and for his efforts to foster reconciliation between Vietnam and the United States. Those in District 19, including me, thank him for a job well-done and extend to him our best wishes for his future endeavors.

HONORING KAREN FONTENOT

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Karen Fontenot, of Duson, Louisiana, who has dedicated her life to helping veterans throughout Southwest Louisiana.

She answered her country's call during the Vietnam Conflict, serving as a nurse in the Philippines.

It was while trying to help move and carry male patients twice her size that Karen first injured her back. It was an injury which left her permanently disabled, unable to walk without the assistance of a cane, and in constant pain. Karen's caring and tender nature was injured, perhaps more severely than her physical being. She suffered with every young man she saw torn apart by the horrors of war.

Upon returning to her family and domestic life in Southwest Louisiana, Karen remained true to her fellow veterans. In an area which lacked Memorial Day and Veterans' Day ceremonies, Karen led a movement to establish those events. She was aided by some fellow veterans, but the brunt of the effort fell on her. For more than a decade, Karen has organized ceremonies to honor those she served alongside as well as those who came before and after her.

When the Iraq War led to the deaths of several local, young men, Karen added a special tribute to the Gold Star Mothers. These families led by the mothers who have lost their child gather with dozens of other veterans and their families to pay tribute to those who have died and those who live.

In addition to the beautiful ceremony, Karen invites all of those attending to a catered lunch at the local Armory. Each of the Gold Star Mothers receives special gifts, and those who have made special contributions are recognized and receive a tribute.

Karen Fontenot broke her back to care for young men injured and killed in the Vietnam conflict and returned home with the intent that all men and women who have sacrificed for their country will be remembered. If it is up to her, none of their sacrifices will be forgotten or overlooked. Karen Fontenot is a patron saint of veterans.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Karen for her achievements and dedication to our nation's veterans.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ABSENTEE BALLOT TRACK, RECEIVE, AND CONFIRM (TRAC) ACT
HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce The Absentee Ballot Track, Receive and Confirm (TRAC) Act—a bill to assist states in establishing absentee ballot tracking systems.

Many voters worry that they cannot determine whether their absentee ballots were actually sent out, received and counted.

In most cases, the fears of one's mail-in ballot somehow being lost in the system are un-

founded—but we all know the concern is still there. Our nation's voters deserve electoral procedures that are transparent and which strengthen their faith in democracy.

Sometimes there is reason for concern. I have heard from people who simply did not receive a ballot they requested. There are various reasons for this from clerical errors to confusion over addresses.

Other times, a problem occurs when an absentee ballot is rejected because a voter's signature has changed over time and the voter never knows the difference.

The good news is that it is possible and practical to track mail ballots.

Many elections offices are already tracking ballots with great success. In fact, in California it is law that all counties establish absentee ballot tracking systems and the systems are quite popular with voters and elections officials.

In my home of San Diego County, CA, our registrar's online voter registration/absentee look-up feature received 98,000 hits before the 2008 November election.

Quite simply, the technology exists to allow voters to easily find out whether an elections office has sent out a ballot, whether a completed ballot has arrived back at the registrar's office, whether the registrar has counted the ballot, and if not, why not.

Implementing ballot tracking systems will bring voters peace of mind and reduce the burden on elections offices which are often barraged with phone calls from voters trying to determine the status of their ballots.

Moreover, the ability to check absentee status round the clock is a convenient service for voters, especially for military and overseas voters in various time zones.

Not only is mail ballot tracking feasible and helpful, but it is also affordable.

Setting up systems at an elections office can be as simple as redesigning a website and linking it to a back-up of a current database as San Mateo County, CA discovered when they created a tracking system for just \$2000.

Absentee tracking could even help elections offices save money in the long run as call volumes will likely go down and the strain on elections office staff declines.

Mail ballot tracking is a win-win for voters and elections officials.

We should follow the lead of the trailblazers who are already tracking mail ballots and encourage local jurisdictions to create tracking systems.

The TRAC Act would allow the federal government to reimburse states for establishing tracking systems. However, I want to be clear that it would not require any state to set up a tracking system.

I am proud to introduce this bill along with my fellow colleague from California, Mr. MCCARTHY and I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in supporting this effort to strengthen the democratic process and give American voters the electoral certainty they deserve.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF
JAMES EDWARD ARRINGTON**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, the city of Jackson, Alabama, and all of southwest Alabama recently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor James Edward Arrington and pay tribute to his memory.

A native of Greensboro, Mayor Arrington was a veteran of the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict. In 1962, he moved to Jackson to build and operate Arrington Nursing Home, which later became Jackson Health Care. He was former auxiliary police chief in Jackson, former owner of A & B Trucking Company, and co-owner of Anderson Brothers Chrysler-Plymouth dealership.

For all of his achievements, James Arrington will perhaps be most remembered for serving as the mayor of Jackson for over two decades. Among the many accomplishments during his five-term administration include: funding of the new city hall building, locating Allied Paper (now Boise) to Jackson, construction of the Vanity Fair building, and construction of the northern Industrial Road bypass.

Just this past February, the Jackson City Council voted to rename City Hall the James E. Arrington City Hall Complex. Mayor Arrington was also named Jackson's Man of the Year for 1973 by the Jackson Civitan Club.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a beloved friend to many throughout southwest Alabama. James Edward Arrington will be dearly missed by his family—his wife, Betty; his two sons, Ed Arrington and Greg Cotton; his two daughters, Leah Trotter and Brenda Fondren; his brother, Johnnie Arrington; his sister, Maggie Nelson; his eight grandchildren; and great-grandchild—as well as the countless friends he leaves behind.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them all during this difficult time.

TRIBUTE TO THE PASSAIC COUNTY COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION, INC.
HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. PASCHELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the work of an outstanding organization, The Passaic County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Prevention, Inc., which will celebrate its 25th Anniversary on May 25, 2009. This milestone marks a quarter century of supporting those most in need of assistance to get their lives on track, and thereby become a productive part of the greater community.

It is only fitting that The Passaic County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Prevention, Inc. be honored in this, the permanent record of the greatest democracy ever known, for all the assistance it has provided to individuals and families in the Passaic County area.