

By supporting the family structure, better education and job training we can begin to reverse the diminished role of fathers in our country. We must all work to help raise awareness on this pressing issue. The importance of fatherhood should not be overlooked by our society if we are to ensure a promising future for the children in America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEAN HELLER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 19, 2009

Mr. HELLER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 405, a motion to reconsider, I was unavoidably detained.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING WALTER DICKERSON
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 19, 2009

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, it is with both pride and pleasure that I rise today to honor the long and distinguished career of Walter Dickerson, on the occasion of his retirement as director of the Mobile County Emergency Management Agency.

Born in Claiborne, Maryland, Walt graduated from Robert Russa Moton High School in 1965. Following his graduation, he joined the United States Marine Corps and went on to serve for 21 years, working his way up through the enlisted, warrant officer, and commissioned officer. He earned a Bachelor's degree in business management from National University. He retired from the Marine Corps after 21 years of service as a decorated Vietnam veteran.

Following his time in the Marines, Walt served as the Integrated Logistics Support Manager for the AAI Corporation and was the department head of Integrated Logistics Support at Teledyne Power Systems. In 1996, he joined the Mobile County Emergency Management Agency, where he has served in a number of capacities including plans and operations officer, director of plans and operations, and executive director and area director of homeland security.

Walt's true gift to the Mobile community was manifested through his efforts during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He received the Blacks in Government Port City Chapter Community Service Award for his contribution to the community following Hurricane Katrina, and he testified twice before Congress on Mobile's successful preparation and response to Hurricane Katrina. He was also recognized by the Alabama Senate, the Mobile County Commission, and the Mobile City Council for his performance during Hurricanes Ivan, Dennis, and Katrina.

Walt is a member of the Port City Chapter of Blacks in Government and the International Association of Emergency Managers. He is the past president of the Society of Logistics

Engineers as well as the Alabama Association of Emergency Managers. He is also greatly involved in the community serving as chairperson for the Tommie Agee Charity Foundation, vice president of the Gulf City Golfers Association, the Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association, Summit to Advance Values in Education, and American Legion Post 77. He is a 32nd Mason and a Shriner. Walt is also a charter member of Mobile's Monford Pointe Marine Association.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a dedicated community leader and friend to many throughout Alabama. I am certain that his family, his many friends, and the countless people who have benefited from his hard work and dedication join me in praising his accomplishments and extending thanks for his service to the city of Mobile and the state of Alabama. On behalf of a grateful community, I wish Walt the best of luck in all of his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 19, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 380, I was present the entire eight hours. Due to an apparent machine malfunction, I was not recorded as voting. This amendment is both fiscally responsible and addresses another excess in spending that continues to drive upward our national debt, crippling current economic growth and saddling future generations with an unacceptable burden which will strangle taxpayers and reduce critical essential benefits to social services, especially seniors.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

RECOGNIZING JUNETEENTH

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 19, 2009

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize June 19, 2009, or "Juneteenth," the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States.

The observance of June 19th as the African American Emancipation Day originated in Galveston, Texas in 1865, and is now celebrated around the United States. This day was chosen because it was on June 19th that the Union soldiers landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free—a full two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation became official on January 1, 1863. The day was largely celebrated within African-American communities until the Civil Rights movement, when Reverend Ralph Abernathy called for people of all races, economic levels, and professions to come to Washington, D.C. to show support for the poor at the Poor People's March on Juneteenth in 1968. Many of the participants returned home and initiated Juneteenth celebrations in their own communities.

Every year, the celebration of Juneteenth grows in popularity across the United States. It is a day when we recognize and remember the evils of slavery and the suffering it caused. But it is also a day that celebrates African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement with celebrations, guest speakers, picnics and family gatherings. Participants of all races, nationalities and religions celebrate and take the time to reflect on the past and rejoice in the present and future.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to note that in California's 37th Congressional District the city of Carson, Compton, and Long Beach, which I am proud to represent, celebrated Juneteenth in a very special way. In Long Beach, The MusicUntold Orchestra and Chorus performed the Bicentennial Symphony, by composer Roy Harris, which is considered the most powerful musical statement ever made on slavery in the United States. Ollie Woodson, formally of the Temptations, performed at the Carson celebration and the Compton celebration featured Howard Hewitt and the Whispers.

As we celebrate Juneteenth, Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to recognize this day and take a moment to honor the women and men that dedicated their lives to ending slavery.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 19, 2009

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, for the entire legislative day of June 18, 2009, I have an excused absence to attend my son's school graduation. If I were present, I would have voted "no" on Rollcall votes No. 356, 359, 360, 361, 362, 364, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 385, 386, 387, 389, 391, 393, 395, 397, 399, 401, 403, 405, and 407.

I would have voted "aye" on Rollcall votes No. 357, 358, 363, 365, 371, 384, 388, 390, 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404, 406, and 408.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 19, 2009

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, on Rollcall No. 356, I intended to vote "yes."

The motion would have struck \$97.4 million from the Federal Prison System in the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2010. It would have brought funding in line with the President's request.

I believe the level of spending in the underlying bill was irresponsible in light of the crushing level of debt that America is facing. This amendment was a small step in a broader effort that I supported to make this a fiscally responsible bill.