

is the world's most important grain for human nutrition, but genomics and biotechnology research have lagged behind. The WGGRC is leading an international effort to map and sequence the wheat genome. The WGGRC gene bank currently maintains 12,000 lines and these collections are continuously expanding as the Center acquires, develops, and distributes new genetic and genomic resources to facilitate wheat genetics, genomics, and breeding research. Kansas State University and Kansas wheat producers have already made an investment of almost \$1.0 million towards the purchase of a DNA sequencer and a robot for arraying and printing of DNA filters. Funding will be used collect, conserve, and distribute wheat genetic and genomic resources; develop improved germ plasm; develop genetic stocks; develop genomic resources; and support training and outreach. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MARY
ALICE TERRY SKAGGS

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 9, 2009

Mr. HALL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and accomplishments of a woman who dedicated more than fifty years of her life to educate and help others, Mary Alice Terry Skaggs of Plano Texas, who passed away this past March.

Mrs. Mary Skaggs was born in Celina, Texas on April 22, 1908. She attended high school at Gunter Bible College and Kidd-Key College in Sherman. Mary received both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Austin College in Sherman, leading her later become the first Independent School District teacher to hold a master's degree.

Mary Skaggs taught English, economics, and journalism in Plano where her expertise in educating others did not go unnoticed. The Texas Federation of Women's Clubs acknowledged Mary as Teacher of the Year in 1958, and the Plano Business and Professional Women's Club honored her with the Career Achievement Award in 1968.

Mary's legacy to better educate, mentor, and improve young lives in the community at large are immortalized in a 2006 No Child Left Behind Ribbon School, the Mary Alice Skaggs Elementary, established by the Plano school district. In recognition of her 30 years as a Plano teacher, the school has been a source of exemplary education since its opening in 1996.

Mary was preceded in death by her husband James Harold Skaggs. She will be missed by her two sisters Addie Lee Cox and Benny Cox, and her niece, and the countless lives that were touched and influenced by her years as an outstanding educator.

Madam Speaker, I commend Mary Alice Terry Skaggs for her lifelong devotion to education and her community.

COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL
FOOD PROGRAM

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 9, 2009

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, last Thursday I attended an event back home in Michigan where a coalition of community organizations came together and committed to delivering 575,000 meals to those in need this summer in southeast Michigan. The Ford Foundation and two Ford dealerships provided new mobile pantries. Gleaners Community Food Bank, Forgotten Harvest, and the United Way are partnering to ensure that the pantries will be fully stocked and sent to the areas which need it the most.

The need for assistance in our country is staggering. In southeast Michigan 600,000 people are at risk of hunger. Food banks and pantries nationwide are seeing a 30 percent increase in demand for emergency food assistance, with some food banks reporting as high as a 65 percent increase in need, according to Feeding America. An astonishing 72 percent of food banks report that they are not able to adequately meet the needs of their communities without adjusting the amount of food distributed due to rising unemployment and food prices.

The federal government has a vital role to play in providing emergency food assistance. We provided some relief in the Recovery Act earlier this year. The Agriculture Appropriation bill before the House continues this investment by providing a 10 percent increase to the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) food aid program as well as a \$19.6 million increase for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

I want to highlight the Commodity Supplemental Food Program because it reaches out to low-income seniors—a group of people who too often fall through the cracks of our food safety net. The program, which has 41,000 monthly participants in southeast Michigan, comes from a partnership between the government and local community organizations. Ninety-three percent of CSFP participants are seniors and many who receive delivery of their food packages are unable to leave their homes. The food packages, as well as the visit from the volunteer, are important in assisting them to maintain their independence and a healthier lifestyle.

Under this bill, the CSFP will be able to increase the number of eligible individuals who participate for the first time since 2003. The program, which currently operates in only 32 states, will expand to six new states, some of which have programs and seniors that have been waiting for six years. The program will grow in Michigan and overall expand from 475,000 participants to 622,000.

Much more must be done. I will introduce legislation soon that will provide an additional incentive for farmers, ranchers, small businesses, and restaurateurs to donate wholesome food to food banks and pantries to replenish the shelves for hungry Americans.

According to a report released by USDA last November, 36.2 million Americans, including 12.4 million children, are food insecure. The report paints a stark picture of the pervasiveness of hunger in our nation, a picture that

has only grown worse as the recession has deepened since the report data was collected in 2007. Hunger puts our children's health, learning, and development at risk; hunger causes unnecessary pain and suffering on already stressed working poor families, and hunger causes our elderly to make difficult choices between buying food or medicine. I applaud the work of the community organizations who work tirelessly to alleviate hunger, and the Appropriations Committee for providing them with more resources. Hunger poses a real threat to our children, seniors, and everyone in our communities. Our progress is important, but we cannot stop here.

ASSESSING THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 9, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, a May 5 Washington Post article opened with these words: "The Obama administration has backed away from overt expressions of support for human rights and democracy in favor of a more subtle approach, worrying advocates who say that the issues are being given short shrift as President Obama seeks to rebuild relations with allies and reach out to adversaries."

I join the ranks of those who are deeply troubled by the trajectory of this administration on human rights.

In a February visit to Asia, Secretary of State Clinton plainly indicated that human rights would not be a priority in her engagement with China. She said, "We pretty much know what they [the Chinese government] are going to say" on human rights issues.

With that logic, the administration will rarely find it advisable to raise human rights concerns with any country, particularly the worst offenders.

Clinton went on, "We have to continue to press them. But our pressing on those issues can't interfere with the global economic crisis, the global climate change crisis, and the security crisis."

Human rights organizations were dismayed. How had impassioned advocacy for the dignity of every person been relegated to a position of mere interference? And this in spite of Obama campaign promises to "be frank with the Chinese" and "press them to respect human rights."

Following Secretary Clinton's Asia comments and subsequent remarks during a visit to the Middle East where she indicated that Egypt's abuses would not negatively affect our bilateral relations, the Washington Post editorialized on March 11, "Ms. Clinton is doing a disservice to her own department—and sending the wrong message to rulers around the world that their abuses won't be taken seriously by this U.S. administration."

Against this backdrop, President Obama in April moved to lift restrictions on travel and remittances for Cuban Americans absent any commitment by the Castro brothers to release even one of the hundreds of political prisoners who languish in jails.

Frank Calzon of the Center for a Free Cuba cautioned, "Lifting the travel ban means the

most hostile elements of the Cuban government will get an injection of our currency . . . The tourist industry is controlled and staffed by the Cuban government. If Washington wants to transfer dollars to the Cuban military, that's one way of doing it."

Cuba is still characterized by our own State Department as a "totalitarian state." This year's National Endowment for Democracy's (NED) annual Democracy Award recently went to five courageous leaders of Cuba's pro-democracy movement. The Washington Post editorial page on June 25 pointed out that in both the Bush and Clinton administrations, NED awardees were given either an audience with the president or a statement of support. Not so this year.

According to the Post, the White House issued a "hastily drafted statement" only after the paper inquired about the president's silence. These brave Cuban democracy activists are, in the words of the Post's editorial page, "hoping that the American president will focus his policy on supporting them. Yet for now, Mr. Obama's diplomacy is clearly centered on their oppressors."

Or consider Sudan. During the campaign, when asked about Darfur, Barack Obama said, "We can't say 'never again' and then allow it to happen again. And, as President of the United States, I don't intend to . . . turn a blind eye to slaughter." He also spoke of "ratcheting up sanctions."

Now, almost six months into the administration, the State Department is still conducting a much vaunted "comprehensive review" of U.S.-Sudan policy. Nothing concrete has emerged. The little that has leaked out in press reports is disturbing.

The administration appears divided at the highest levels over whether genocide is even still taking place in Darfur. Furthermore, they are making overtures to Khartoum which are, at best, naive.

As recently as June 18, The Post reported that Special Envoy Gration "has advocated easing some American sanctions and upgrading U.S. diplomatic relations with Sudan's government to induce cooperation."

And more recently on the Iranian elections, while the president's tone has toughened a bit in the face of increased pressure and bloodshed, his initial response was painfully muted. Asked about whether there was "any red line" his administration wouldn't cross where the "offer [to talk to Iran's leaders] will be shut off," the president simply replied, "We're waiting to see how it plays itself out."

A July 6 National Review Online posting on the plight of seven imprisoned Baha'i leaders set to go on trial later this week, pointed out that a "restrained approach" to human rights advocacy "may not work for the seven imprisoned Baha'i in Iran, who face trial on July 11. The Iranian regime needs to understand that such blatant religious persecution has consequences. Silence may convince the Iranian leadership that they can get away with murder."

The Baha'is are not the only minority faith in the region under duress. In the president's much anticipated Cairo speech, he only made fleeting reference to Egypt's Coptic Christians, saying that "religious diversity must be upheld." But far more than diversity is at stake.

A June 26 press release by the bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious

Freedom following recent reported attacks on Egyptian Copts describes the pattern of persecution endured by this community. The commission indicated that "initial reports say that state security services did little to prevent the violence from occurring. This repeats the established pattern that security services do not adequately protect Christian citizens in many localities. For all Christians in Egypt, government permission is required to build a new church or repair an existing one, and the approval process for church construction is time-consuming and inflexible. Even some permits that have been approved cannot be acted upon because of interference by the state security services at both the local and national levels."

A May 7 Washington Post editorial described the Obama administration as rushing to "embrace Egypt's 81-year-old strongman," in reference to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The editorial went on to say that the administration is retreating from raising human rights abuses and that "the pullback is not only rhetorical." Funding for democracy promotion in Egypt, reportedly at the request of the U.S. ambassador to Egypt, was initially cut from \$50 million to \$20 million this year. That number has since been bumped by \$5 million as the funding bill has moved through the committee process—but even with that increase, the funding amounts to half of the previous year's figure. Given that millions of dollars in unconditioned foreign aid has gone to the Egyptian government in the years following the Camp David accords, this slash in civil society funding is an embarrassment.

One of the darkest places on the globe is North Korea. More than 200,000 North Koreans—including children—are being held in political prison camps. It is estimated that between 400,000 and one million people have died in these camps, having been worked to death or starved to death.

A June 16 op-ed in the Wall Street Journal featured a quote from a North Korean refugee woman who said, "If I had a chance to meet with President Obama, I would first like to tell him how North Korean women are being sold like livestock in China and, second, to know that North Korean labor camps are hell on earth."

Even in the face of North Korea's nuclear ambitions it is inexcusable for their abhorrent human rights record to not just be relegated to the back burner, but seemingly removed from the agenda altogether. Unlike past administrations, this administration had nothing to say, no public statement, acknowledging North Korea Human Rights Week this April, and Secretary Clinton, who was in town, could not find time in her schedule to meet with any of the 30 brave North Korean defectors in the nation's capital to mark the occasion.

Or consider Vietnam. In its 2009 annual report, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom found that, "Individuals continue to be imprisoned or detained for reasons related to their religious activity or religious freedom advocacy; police and government officials are not held fully accountable for abuses; independent religious activity remains illegal; and legal protections for government-approved religious organizations are both vague and subject to arbitrary or discriminatory interpretations based on political factors." The commission recommended that Vietnam be placed back on the State Department's

Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) list, a list reserved for the world's worst offenders of religious freedom.

But a June 25 Washington Times article reported that "U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Michael W. Michalak recently rejected calls by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) to put Vietnam back on the CPC watch list. He cited that there was not enough evidence of religious persecution."

This is the same ambassador who recently gave a 4th of July speech in which he cited the timeless words of our own Declaration of Independence, but then had nothing to say about the oppression and lack of freedom in Vietnam. It is worth noting that Ambassador Michalak is a career foreign service officer who has been in his current position since the last years of the Bush administration. He is well acquainted with my concerns regarding his apparent disregard for human rights in Vietnam and his failure to make the U.S. embassy an island of freedom.

I was quick to criticize the Bush administration when it seemed that they were missing opportunities to be a voice for the voiceless. Too often in the previous administration the public rhetoric failed to match action. But in this new, young administration, even the rhetoric is absent.

Reports of the President's trip to Russia quote a top National Security Council adviser as saying the Obama administration "came to the conclusion that us waving our fingers around the world is a strategy that hasn't worked very well in the past." This same adviser later conceded to Politico that human rights were never raised in Obama's meeting with Russian President Putin.

It seems this administration could learn a lesson from history . . . from another Russian in fact.

The year was 1975. Famed Soviet dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was set to visit Washington. The city's foreign policy establishment, among them Henry Kissinger, sought to obstruct him at every turn. He was refused a meeting with President Ford, who declined to meet with him fearing it would sour an upcoming meeting with Soviet leader Brezhnev. When Solzhenitsyn delivered a major speech at the AFL-CIO, State Department employees were forbidden from attending.

Ronald Reagan, former governor of California, was angered at the snub and wrote a column which appeared in papers across the country exposing the White House's motives for refusing an audience with this renowned dissident, author of Gulag Archipelago. Reagan wrote, "the real reason for the snub surfaced: a visit with Solzhenitsyn would violate the 'spirit of détente.'"

Fast forward eight years. Now president, Mr. Reagan delivers an electrifying speech where he refers to the Soviet Union as the "evil empire."

Another Soviet dissident, Natan Sharansky, wrote in his book of how word of that speech penetrated the gulag. "Tapping on walls and talking through toilets, word of Reagan's 'provocation' quickly spread through the prison. The dissidents were ecstatic. Finally the leader of the free world had spoken the truth—a truth that burned inside the heart of each and every one of us."

Nearly 30 years later, much has changed, but much remains the same. Speaking truth to power will always place America on the right

side of history. Speaking out for those who have no voice will always be a source of hope for people in the darkest corners of the globe.

This President and this Secretary of State need to remember that the surest way to accomplish their stated goal of bolstering America's standing in the world is to find common cause not with oppressors, but with those they repress.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF PAUL
M. WEYRICH

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 9, 2009

Mr. HALL of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is with deep respect that I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding American, a great champion of conservative values, and my good friend, Paul M. Weyrich, who passed away last December 18, 2008. His contributions to American conservative politics over the past 35 years have been tremendous. Paul co-founded the Heritage Foundation in 1973, and in 1974 organized the Committee for the Survival of Free Congress, which later reorganized into the Free Congress Foundation on which he served as Chairman and CEO. By 1977, both the Heritage Foundation and Free Congress Foundation were ranked in the top 5 most influential and best funded conservative think tanks. Paul also held the highest honorary position in the Council for National Policy.

Born in Racine, Washington to Ignatius and Virginia Weyrich, Paul began his interest in politics while attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison. At the age of 19, he joined the Racine County Young Republicans where he was active for the next three years until 1964, when he chose to take part in Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign. In 1966 he became the press secretary to Republican U.S. Senator Gordon L. Allott of Colorado. While there he became acquainted with Jack Wilson, an aide to Joseph Coors of the Coors Brewing family. This contact spurred a series of events, which resulted in the formation of the Heritage Foundation.

The Free Congress Foundation, established shortly after the formation of the Heritage Foundation, and where Mr. Weyrich served as President from 1977 until 2002, is yet another milestone in his long list of achievements. The FCF served as a format to train and mobilize conservative activists, recruit conservative candidates, as well as raise funds for conservative causes. To raise funds, the FCF became one of the first organizations to utilize evangelical churches for recruiting support for conservative politics.

A titan in the world of conservative politics, Mr. Weyrich worked ceaselessly. His contributions include co-founding the Christian Voice with Robert Grant in 1977; co-founding the Moral Majority with Jerry Falwell in 1979; founding the American Legislative Exchange Council; founding the Council for National Policy; co-publishing the magazine *Conservative Digest*; serving as the National Chairman of Coalitions for America; founding the Washington, D.C. based satellite television station "National Empowerment Television (NET)", which later re-launched as "America's Voice";

serving as President of the Kriebel Institute from 1989 to 1996, a unit of FCF which trained activists to support democracy movements and establish small businesses in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Mr. Weyrich was also an ardent supporter of rail mass transit; his expertise in this area was utilized while he served as an AMTRAK Director and a National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commissioner. In and after 1989, Mr. Weyrich traveled to the former Communist Soviet Union where he organized training courses for the promotion of democracy and individual rights. In 2005 Mr. Weyrich won the Heritage Foundation's prestigious Clare Booth Luce Award.

These accomplishments are a testament to his unwavering commitment and passion for conservatism. A leader in his faith, as well as in the political realm, Paul was ordained in 1990 as a deacon in the Melkite Greek Eparchy, a conservative Catholic Church.

A few years ago he was diagnosed with a spinal injury, arachnoiditis, and as his illness progressed over the years, he was confined to a wheelchair. Despite these limitations, Paul persisted in his pursuit to better the nation and world through conservatism. He continued to play key roles as a political advisor and speaker, even finding time to organize summit meetings on the future of conservatism, and write opinion pieces for his own foundation and for news organizations.

On December 18, 2008, Paul passed away in Fairfax, Virginia, and our country lost one of its strongest champions for conservatism. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Joyce, their five children and thirteen grandchildren.

Revered Louis P. Sheldon commented on the life of his friend, stating "Paul Weyrich was a pioneer of the conservative movement and a staunch defender of traditional values. He was a brilliant strategist, an aggressive defender of the faith, and a determined foe against the failed philosophy of liberalism. Most of all, he was a good friend, confidante and someone who could be relied upon to do the right thing for our nation and for the Christian faith, which he embraced. We will miss him—and the conservative movement has lost a giant whose influence will be felt for years to come."

Though Paul is no longer with us, he leaves a powerful legacy that will be remembered for generations to come. Madam Speaker, I ask those here today to join me in remembering and celebrating the life and achievements of this great American, Mr. Paul M. Weyrich.

AGRICULTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 8, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2997) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal

year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes:

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 2997, the Agriculture Appropriations bill. This bill wisely devotes half of the total appropriations in the entire bill to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly called the Food Stamp Program.

The face of hunger takes many forms. This week while driving in my district I saw a homeless woman who suffered from chronic hunger, begging on the street corner. When the most basic need for food goes unmet, the most basic functions of living that so many of us take for granted become difficult, if not impossible. It threatens the economic and social well-being of the affected person, and sometimes the entire family. And while this homeless and hungry soul is an apt example of the face of hunger, the truth is that food insecurity is hurting far more than just the severely disadvantaged. Food insecurity is hurting our middle class, our children and our seniors among others. During difficult economic times like these, hunger's invisibility belies its startling prevalence.

In the United States 1 in 8 or approximately 36 million Americans struggle with hunger, 13 million of which are children. According to the USDA 1 in 6 American children are food insecure. One out of every five children under five years of age is living at risk of hunger in 13 states around our nation.

In my home state of Ohio, 12.7 percent of Ohioans are food insecure; 18.7 percent of Ohio's children are food insecure; and 23.3 percent of children under the age of five are food insecure. Ohio has recently been reported to have the third highest rate of food insecure children under the age of 5 in the nation.

Uncertain times in our country and economy are even more uncertain for these children as their malnutrition will have a long-lasting impact on their future development. Proper nutrition throughout life is important but research tells us that for children three and under it is particularly important as this is the time that children build a foundation for the rest of their life. It is precisely the time when their brains and central nervous systems are growing the fastest. A good foundation is essential to a child's future health, including mental health, educational accomplishment and economic viability.

Recent reports indicate that across our nation, 33.8 million people were enrolled in SNAP in April 2009. This is a new record and an increase of 20 percent over last year. It is expected that SNAP will serve approximately 35 million Americans in Fiscal Year 2010. According to a study from the Center for Community Solutions, portions of my district, including Lakewood, Fairview Park and Parma, have experienced a 74 percent increase in participation in the Food Stamp Program (now called SNAP) between 2002 and 2007. Furthermore, our local food bank, the Cleveland Food Bank, has significantly increased distribution since the start of the current fiscal year. Already they have distributed three million more pounds of food in the current fiscal year than was distributed in the entire prior year. By October 2009 it is expected that this number will increase to four million pounds. In Northeast Ohio local food pantries have experienced a 35 percent increase in clients. Many of these clients are first time users of the food bank.