

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION
EXTENSION ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, during the vote on H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009, I was unavoidably detained—had I been present I would have voted for this legislation.

Americans are struggling to make ends meet in this economy. Retirement savings are disappearing, families have seen their portfolios drop, and according to the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the unemployment rate in Illinois is at 10 percent—.3 percent higher than the national average has been in 26 years.

I support giving unemployment benefits to people who lost their jobs. In tough economic times, the federal government should offer additional assistance and H.R. 3548 does that by extending unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks for individuals living in States with unemployment rates above 8.5 percent.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN CHANDLER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. CHANDLER. Madam Speaker, on roll-call No. 709, had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING REBECCA PARRIS OF
SWAIN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**HON. HEATH SHULER**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. SHULER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Rebecca Parris, a remarkable young woman in Swain County, North Carolina.

Miss Parris, a student of Swain County High School, raised over \$4,000 for the Shriners Hospital for Children in Greenville, South Carolina. Miss Parris was inspired to take action upon hearing that reductions in donations and increasing medical costs could lead to the possible closure of the Greenville hospital, which serves children in the Greenville and Western North Carolina areas. To help keep the hospital open, Miss Parris coordinated and hosted a fundraising event, "Shriners for Minors," in Bryson City, North Carolina on August 8, 2009. The event included participation by a number of vendors and children's activities organized by her fellow high school students. After the event, Miss Parris made a visit to the hospital to present the donations and over 70 donated toys.

Miss Parris has always worked hard to serve those in her community. As an elementary school student she made Christmas gifts for local nursing home residents. Miss Parris maintains an excellent academic record and has been inducted into the National Honor So-

ciety this year. She is part of the track and cross country team, plays basketball, and is the best marksperson on the shooting team at Swain County High School. She also worked full-time at a grocery store over the summer while organizing the fundraiser.

Madam Speaker, Miss Parris's dedication to children in need in our mountain region and her efforts on behalf of the Shriners Hospital for Children are a great source of pride to me and to Western North Carolina. Miss Parris exemplifies the motto of Swain County Schools: "Our Best and Then Some." I urge my colleagues to join me today in commending the outstanding efforts of this remarkable young woman.

TRIBUTE TO WILL LUMMUS

HON. TRAVIS W. CHILDERS

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. CHILDERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a National Little Britches Rodeo Champion, Will Lummus, a fierce competitor in the senior tie-down calf-roping finals. Every year, more than 700 of the National Little Britches Association's top athletes from across the country gather in Pueblo, Colorado to take shots at 30 world championships.

Madam Speaker, with distinct honor and pride, I, along with the citizens of West Point, Mississippi congratulate our own national calf-roping champion, Will Lummus. I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending Will for his hard work and dedication. I hope he will continue to compete and victoriously represent Mississippi's First District.

RECOGNIZING FIRST LIEUTENANT
MICHAEL PARRISH—SCOTTSDALE
HEALTHCARE'S "SALUTE TO
MILITARY" HONOREE**HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a member of the Armed Forces from my home state of Arizona. Every month, Scottsdale Healthcare honors service members who perform diligent service to this country. For the month of August, they have recognized First Lieutenant Michael Parrish.

I commend Scottsdale Healthcare for paying tribute to such an outstanding service member for his bravery and service to our country.

Parrish joined the Army National Guard in 2001 to further his education and serve his country. After completing basic training, he provided medical coverage for cadets who were training at West Point Military Academy. During his tenure, 100 percent of the cadets finished the training without injury. This September, Parrish will deploy to Vicenza, Italy, to provide care to Army soldiers and families.

In addition to his military work, Michael is an avid supporter of the Scottsdale Healthcare Military Partnership Training Program, which is designed to ensure military medical personnel have the necessary skills and experience to

operate in a wartime setting. Without a doubt, his outstanding leadership and dedication contribute to the success of this very important program.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing the inspiring efforts of this courageous citizen who is serving our country and protecting the lives of his fellow service men and women in combat.

STATEMENT REGARDING VOTE ON
H.R. 3548, UNEMPLOYMENT COM-
PENSATION EXTENSION ACT OF
2009**HON. LAMAR SMITH**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, on September 22, 2009, I voted "no" on H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009. As of August 2009, the State of Texas had 966,000 people who were unemployed. This amounts an unemployment rate of 8.0 percent but this legislation only applied to states with unemployment over 8.5 percent so unemployed Texans were not eligible. I would have voted for H.R. 3548 because so many people across the country continue to be unemployed if the bill had not discriminated against Texas and 22 other states with unemployment rates lower than 8.5 percent.

The State of Texas has many counties and communities where the unemployment rate is higher than 8.5 percent. Many more individuals should have qualified for these benefits. Furthermore, since employers in Texas continue to pay the taxes that pay for these benefits, they are subsidizing the unemployment benefits in other states without any of the revenue going to unemployed Texans. This bill is unfair and for that reason I could not support it.

STATEMENT REGARDING VOTE ON
H.R. 3548, UNEMPLOYMENT COM-
PENSATION EXTENSION ACT OF
2009**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, yesterday I voted for the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act (H.R. 3548), legislation that will provide an additional 13 weeks of extended benefits to individuals in states with unemployment above a three-month average of 8.5 percent. Because so many Americans have lost their once steady job and are struggling to find work and make ends meet during these difficult economic times, I feel that extending unemployment benefits is a necessity.

I was disappointed, however, that this legislation only included an extension of benefits for 29 states by setting an 8.5 percent state unemployment rate as the threshold for those eligible under this bill. In Virginia, where unemployment stands at 6.5 percent for the month of August, those out of work who have exhausted their benefits will not be covered.

Families across the country are struggling to pay their mortgage, to pay for health care expenses. They have depleted their savings and

are hanging on by a thread. Those out of work in Virginia aren't struggling any less than those in Ohio, Michigan, or California, where the statewide unemployment rates are higher. I believe that this is an issue of fairness that needs to be corrected.

To reach out to those who are looking for work in Virginia's 10th Congressional District, which includes some areas that reached an unemployment rate of 8 percent this summer, I am sponsoring a job fair in Frederick County in October. I held a similar event in Loudoun County in May and more than 70 employers attended to meet with more than 3,500 job-seekers.

People across the country are hurting and Virginia is no exception. While I believe voting for the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act will help many who have felt the brunt of the recession, I remain disappointed that unemployed Virginians were left behind. This measure should be amended to help all those across the country, rather than using an arbitrary threshold to determine who is most deserving.

IN RECOGNITION OF VIRGINIA GRANATO AND HER DECADE OF SERVICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE ROOSEVELT ISLAND DISABLED ASSOCIATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Virginia Granato, an outstanding New Yorker who has distinguished herself through her dedication and service to her community and to our nation. Virginia Granato is being honored this month by the membership of the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association (RIDA) on the occasion of her retirement from its presidency, a post in which she served with distinction for a decade.

Virginia Granato is a revered figure among the residents of the very special Roosevelt Island community, a unique enclave in the most densely populated county in the nation. She delivered extraordinary and effective leadership to the large population of people with disabilities on the Island. In addition to her devoted and effective service as President of RIDA, Virginia served on the Board of Directors of Wheelchair Charities and on the Community Advisory Board of Coler-Goldwater Hospital.

Virginia Granato was one of the original pioneers of Roosevelt Island, first moving into the Island's Eastwood housing development in 1976. She became a powerful and respected voice for Roosevelt Island residents with disabilities, pressing to make the Island's transportation more accessible, counseling planners on the design and layout of apartment complexes, and facilitating a lending program for residents in need of wheelchairs and walkers.

In leading the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association for a decade, Virginia Granato carried out RIDA's vital mission of improving the quality of life of Roosevelt Islanders with disabilities. As RIDA President, she helped organize and secure funding for regular field trips by Association members to athletic contests,

cultural institutions, musical performances and recitals, amusement parks and other recreational venues.

For more than a third of a century, Virginia Granato has been a leader of the Roosevelt Island community that she loves. She has volunteered for various worthwhile civic causes and selflessly devoted thousands of hours of her time. Virginia Granato offers an example of the finest impulses of the human spirit, and through her dedication and compassion, thousands of lives have been affected for the better.

Madam Speaker, for her leadership, dedication and volunteer service over the years, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing the enormous contributions to the civic life of her community and our nation made by Virginia Granato.

INTRODUCING PUBLIC SAFETY INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS (PSIC) GRANT PROGRAM

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that will help America's first responders keep their communities safer by solving a dangerous deficiency in their emergency communications capabilities. Our first responders are also our first preventers, and their ability to communicate seamlessly and effectively on an interoperable network during an emergency helps save lives and protect critical infrastructure.

For over 7 years, I have worked to prevent a tragic repetition of the communications problems that resulted in thousands of deaths on 9/11—when the lack of an interoperable network prevented the NYPD from warning firefighters that the Twin Towers were glowing red and it was time to evacuate.

My home State of California is prone to natural disasters, especially earthquakes and wild fires. Alarming, there are still instances when our firefighters have relied on runners and drivers to relay messages during an emergency. This occurs when multiple companies respond to the same incident, each carrying different equipment.

An important piece of the solution to this crisis is the Public Safety Interoperable Communications, PSIC, grant program, which provides funding to purchase interoperable communications equipment and undertake training to use it.

Since 2007, the PSIC program has provided nearly \$1 billion in grants to state and local governments, and the deadline to spend the funds is next year. All states were required to develop Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans, SCIP. Unfortunately, according to the Department of Homeland Security, its approval of these plans was delayed until the spring of 2008, in part because DHS wanted to ensure they were subject to appropriate environmental reviews. This is understandable; however, the delay in approving SCIP plans means that not all of the grant funds can be spent before next year's deadline.

The PSIC program is vital to public safety; it should be allowed the necessary time and funding. The legislation I introduce today—

which is a companion bill to S.1694 introduced by Senators Rockefeller and Hutchinson—would guarantee a one-year extension to spend the grant money, with an option for an additional year approved on a case-by-case basis.

While I urge prompt action on this bill, this will in no way relieve us of the obligation to complete the build-out of the 700 megahertz spectrum so that we develop true national interoperability. I am enormously disappointed that, despite universal agreement on the goal, real progress has been so slow.

In conclusion, the PSIC program must be continued. It is a building block in the effort to equip our communities to respond to a terrorist attack or natural disaster. I urge prompt consideration and passage.

RECOGNIZING JOHN R. RIBNER

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize John R. Ribner as he is honored at the Flint Youth Projects' 15th Annual Roast and Toast on October 1st in Burton Michigan.

John Ribner grew up during the 1940s in New York City. He started high school on a baseball scholarship at St. Anne's Academy in New York. After two years he transferred to North Branch High School in Michigan to help care for an ailing relative. He continued his schooling and athletics at North Branch, playing several sports and making the first team in All-State basketball. This led to a basketball scholarship to Central Michigan University. John obtained his teaching degree from that school and in 1964 began teaching with the Flint School District.

He taught at Fairview School, Holmes School and Whittier. During this time he was named Teacher of the Year by the school district and by Flint Sales and Marketing Group. He is now retired but still devotes his time and energy to helping children in need. Along with his wife, Dolly, John distributes turkeys at Thanksgiving every year to families and children. He believes that many people over the years have given to him and the turkey drive is a way to give back to the community. He said, "Of all my life's accomplishments, I am especially proud of the turkey drive for this reason."

As a trustee of the Westwood Heights Board of Education, John continues his interest and commitment to education. Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the achievements and contributions of John R. Ribner.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM
THREATENS THE WORLD

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my grave concerns over Iran's illicit nuclear program. In the midst of all the attention being paid to issues such as the economy and