

INTRODUCING THE AMERICAN
TRAVELER DIGNITY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, today I introduce legislation to protect Americans from physical and emotional abuse by Federal Transportation Security Administration employees conducting screenings at the Nation's airports. We have seen the videos of terrified children being grabbed and probed by airport screeners. We have read the stories of Americans being subjected to humiliating body imaging machines and/or forced to have the most intimate parts of their bodies poked and fondled. We do not know the potentially harmful effects of the radiation emitted by the new millimeter wave machines.

In one recent well-publicized case, a TSA official is recorded during an attempted body search saying, "By buying your ticket you gave up a lot of rights." I strongly disagree and am sure I am not alone in believing that we Americans should never give up our rights in order to travel. As our Declaration of Independence states, our rights are inalienable. This TSA version of our rights looks more like the "rights" granted in the old Soviet Constitutions, where freedoms were granted to Soviet citizens—right up to the moment the state decided to remove those freedoms.

The incident of the so-called "underwear bomber" last Christmas is given as justification for the billions of dollars the federal government is spending on the new full-body imaging machines, but a Government Accountability Office study earlier this year concluded that had these scanners been in use they may not have detected the explosive material that was allegedly brought onto the airplane. Additionally, there have been recent press reports calling into question the accuracy and adequacy of these potentially dangerous machines.

My legislation is simple. It establishes that airport security screeners are not immune from any U.S. law regarding physical contact with another person, making images of another person, or causing physical harm through the use of radiation-emitting machinery on another person. It means they are subject to the same laws as the rest of us.

Imagine if the political elites in our country were forced to endure the same conditions at the airport as business travelers, families, senior citizens, and the rest of us. Perhaps this problem could be quickly resolved if every cabinet secretary, every Member of Congress, and every department head in the Obama administration were forced to submit to the same degrading screening process as the people who pay their salaries.

I warned at the time of the creation of the TSA that an unaccountable government entity in control of airport security would provide neither security nor defend our basic freedom to travel. Yet the vast majority of both Republicans and Democrats then in Congress willingly voted to create another unaccountable, bullying agency—in a simple-minded and unprincipled attempt to appease public passion in the wake of 9–11. Sadly, as we see with the steady TSA encroachment on our freedom and dignity, my fears in 2001 were justified.

The solution to the need for security at U.S. airports is not a government bureaucracy. The

solution is to allow the private sector, preferably the airlines themselves, to provide for the security of their property. As a recent article in Forbes magazine eloquently stated, "The airlines have enormous sums of money riding on passenger safety, and the notion that a government bureaucracy has better incentives to provide safe travels than airlines with billions of dollars worth of capital and goodwill on the line strains credibility." In the meantime, I hope we can pass this legislation and protect Americans from harm and humiliation when they choose to travel.

TOM KONGSGAARD POST OFFICE
BUILDING

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2010

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 6237, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1351 2nd Street in Napa, California, as the "Tom Kongsgaard Post Office Building".

Tom Kongsgaard was a Napa County Superior Court Judge from 1958 to 1984. As a judge, he missed only one day of work throughout his entire career. He served two terms on the California Judicial Council, was a member and chairman of the Judicial Performance Commission, and was a member of the Board of Directors of the California Judges' Association.

Tom attended Georgetown University before enlisting in the Navy during World War II. He was a Naval officer in the Pacific Theater, and was stationed at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo by the end of the conflict. He returned to school and studied at U.C. Berkeley, then received a law degree from Stanford. Tom had a passion for public service and justice.

He is survived by his two daughters, Mary Williams and Martha Goldman; his son, John; seven grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

A retired Napa district judge said of Tom, "He was a prince of a man and a towering leader in this community, both on the bench and off. He was a role model for all."

I am honored to bring this bill to the floor and hope that Tom Kongsgaard's legacy will live on, encouraging others to serve their community to the best of their ability.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I was unable to cast votes on the following legislative measures on November 15, 2010. If I were present for rollcall votes, I would have voted "yea" on each of the following:

Roll 566, November 15, 2010: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended: S. 3689, To clarify, improve, and correct the laws relating to copyrights.

Roll 567, November 15, 2010: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree: H. Res. 1713, Recognizing the 50th anniversary of Ruby Bridges desegregating a previously all-White public elementary school.

Roll 568, November 15, 2010: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree: H. Con. Res. 328, Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the successful and substantial contributions of the amendments to the patent and trademark laws that were initially enacted in 1980 by Public Law 96–517 (commonly referred to as the Bayh-Dole Act) on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of its enactment.

HONORING MARVIN SCOTT FOR
HIS FIFTY YEARS OF EXCELLENCE
IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Marvin Scott and his fifty years of excellence in broadcast journalism.

Marvin began his foray into journalism as a 14-year-old in the Bronx, chasing celebrities and fire trucks and selling his pictures to local newspapers. Today, he is a seven time Emmy award winner in the category of outstanding journalistic achievement. He has covered 16 presidential nominating conventions, 8 mayoral elections, and 8 gubernatorial elections. Among those he has interviewed include former Presidents Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, and George Bush Sr., as well as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Israeli President Shimon Peres, Henry Kissinger, Rev. Billy Graham, Astronaut Gordon Cooper, Larry King, Sophia Loren, Tony Bennett, Charlton Heston, and Jerry Lewis.

Among his assignments, Marvin was in Wiesbaden, Germany after hostages were released from a hijacked TWA jet, and covered the McDonald's massacre in San Ysidro, California in which a gunman killed 21 people. Over his remarkable half a century of dedication to journalism, Marvin has not simply covered history, but has been a part of the important stories and events of our time. He was the first American reporter since the demise of the Soviet Union to go to sea aboard a Russian warship. His investigation into cheating on New York citywide tests led to legislation making it a crime.

According to Marvin, the most difficult story that he has had to cover was the terrorist attacks of September 11th. In his own words: "I wasn't reporting something that was happening in some far-off place, but it was here and I was a part of the story, feeling the same anger and pain as our viewers." On the anniversary of 9/11 he gained an exclusive by flying over Ground Zero in the back seat of an F–15.

I want to thank Marvin Scott for not only being a truly outstanding broadcast reporter and newsmen, but for being a great storyteller and true personification of New York. Most importantly, I am proud to call Marvin and his wife Lorri my friends.