

CONGRESSIONAL VICTIMS' RIGHTS CAUCUS AWARDS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, during National Crime Victims' Rights Week, to congratulate the winner of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus Awards.

Congressman JIM COSTA of California and I are the co-founders and co-chairs of the Victims' Rights Caucus, a bi-partisan group of 60 members who work to be a voice for victims' rights in Congress and before the administration.

Last week, we honored six incredible individuals who have made a real difference in the lives of victims and have greatly influenced the victims' rights movement.

Some of the award recipients, including my nominee, Jess Smoczek, were victims themselves and are now fighting for other victims' rights and changes in the system.

Jess was terribly beaten, raped, and left for dead while volunteering for the Peace Corps in Bangladesh.

The Peace Corps basically ignored Jess and did nothing to aid her in a time of great need.

Jess found out that other volunteers in the Peace Corps, who were victimized during their service, were treated the same way.

Instead of letting this go on, Jess took her awful experience and decided to advocate for a change in the Peace Corps policy toward victims.

Because of her bravery in speaking out about this tough issue, the national media and Congress are aware of this unacceptable matter and are working with her to push for changes in the Peace Corps.

We honored her with the Suzanne McDaniel Public Awareness Award because of her hard work to ensure no other selfless volunteer in the Peace Corps has to endure this treatment.

Helga Luest is another award recipient who chose to seek change in the system after having a traumatic experience as a crime victim.

After a brutal attack that almost cost her and her mother's lives, Helga began an organization called Witness Justice that works to help victims seek justice and experience healing.

She is able to help countless victims with her first-hand knowledge of trauma and its direct impact on the well being of the individual.

Helga received the Eva Murillo Unsung Hero Award because it truly takes a hero to rise up and use lessons from a terrible situation to help others.

We also recognized heroes in the victims' rights community that directly aid crime victims through their work at shelters and with programs that assist victims and facilitate healing.

Pam Kallsen, nominated by Victims' Rights Caucus Co-Chair Congressman JIM COSTA, is the Executive Director of the Marjaree Mason Center in California's Central Valley.

Through her leadership, the Center goes above and beyond traditional services providing legal representation, hotline services, and counseling sessions all of which are critical in responding to and preventing domestic and sexual abuse.

Another exceptional leader in the field is Mary Ellen Stone, the Executive Director of

the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) in Washington State, a position in which she has served since 1979.

Mary Ellen has not only helped KCSARC grow to be the largest sexual assault victims' service organization in the state but has also been involved in transforming the legal and political landscape of sexual assault violence in Washington and throughout the nation.

Without these exemplary individuals, many victims would have nowhere to turn when facing a difficult situation and that is why these two wonderful women received the Ed Stout Memorial Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy.

A leader on the public policy front, receiving the the Lois Haight Award for Excellence and Innovation is Susan Smith Howley, Director of Public Policy for the National Center for Victims of Crime.

She has devoted the past 20 years to the development and implementation of major crime victim related public policy initiatives at the local, state and national levels.

Not long ago crime victims had few to no rights, and we are still working hard to ensure victims receive all the care and compensation they deserve.

People like Susan, who work to ensure that the government protects innocent victims through creating and promoting innovative policies, are invaluable to victims throughout the country.

Our last award, the Allied Professional Award was presented to Nilda Valmores who has dedicated her life to helping victims of domestic violence.

The shelter where she serves as Executive Director, My Sister's House, focuses on the needs of immigrant Asian/Pacific Islander women and children.

Through Nilda's collaborations with organizations throughout her community, My Sister's House and the larger issue of domestic violence facing immigrant women has received much needed attention.

Congratulations to these amazing people, who are the reason why the victims' rights movement has made so much progress.

And that's just the way it is.

A TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH REDENBAUGH

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Elizabeth Redenbaugh, of Wilmington, North Carolina, who has been named an honoree of the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award. On May 23, 2011, Mrs. Redenbaugh will be recognized for standing up to racial and socioeconomic segregation perceived in the New Hanover County school system.

The John F. Kennedy Library Foundation will be presenting the award. Caroline Kennedy, the President of the Foundation, has said of Mrs. Redenbaugh: "She boldly challenged the citizens of her community to preserve quality public education for all of New Hanover County's children regardless of race." In light of these acts, the foundation's committee saw fit to bestow upon Elizabeth

Redenbaugh what is generally seen as the highest honor available to United States public servants.

As well as serving on the New Hanover County School Board, Mrs. Redenbaugh practices as an attorney with Redenbaugh & Risser, PLLC. So committed is she to public service that she serves as a member of Parsley Elementary School's Site Based Management Team and PTA Board of Directors and also as a member of the New Hanover County Council of PTAs' Executive Board. Her tenacious efforts in Southeastern North Carolina are those of a true leader utterly dedicated to the betterment of local education, and her community as a whole.

Mrs. Redenbaugh's personal courage and political courage are to be congratulated. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in recognizing a local heroine, whose principled efforts in the face of robust opposition might serve as an example to us all. Let us celebrate a noble public servant, soon to be the recipient of an award intent on decorating those who choose principle over partisanship, a quality we should all strive to emulate for the good of the United States.

DR. DAVID SVALDI TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. David Svaldi of Alamosa, Colorado. Dr. Svaldi was recently appointed to El Pomar Foundation's San Luis Valley Regional Council. As one of southern Colorado's most esteemed residents he will undoubtedly thrive in that position.

Dr. Svaldi is president of Adams State College, a job he balances with his other volunteer work. He sits on the boards of the area's Boys and Girls Club, Health Education Council and the Southern Colorado Education Consortium.

The education and health industries in southern Colorado are growing quickly. It is important that people like Dr. Svaldi, who have a history of involvement and success in those areas, lend their expertise to the growing infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, it is a honor to recognize Dr. David Svaldi today. He will continue to be a leader in his community and work to better the lives of his neighbors.

MEDICAL COMMUNITY UNDER ATTACK IN BAHRAIN

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my deep concern regarding a serious human rights crisis that is currently unfolding in Bahrain, a strategic ally of the United States in the Middle East.

As Physicians for Human Rights has reported, the medical community in that country has come under attack by Bahrani authorities during the currently ongoing unrest, and doctors, nurses and emergency medical technicians have been arrested, detained, harassed

and prevented from fulfilling their ethical obligations of providing medical care.

In doing so, the government of Bahrain is violating well-established laws of medical neutrality.

Just this Monday, April 11, at least six physicians were arrested by the government of Bahrain in its sweeping campaign against medical professionals over the past several weeks. Those arrested on that day include Dr. Abdulshaheed Fadhel, Dr. Jawad Khamees, Dr. Zahra Alsammak, Dr. Arif Rajab, Dr. Nabeel Hameed, and Dr. Nabeel Tammam.

I call on the State Department to do everything in its power to facilitate the release of these individuals and to bring an end to similar attacks on the medical profession in Bahrain.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN HEALTH INITIATIVE ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of The Violence Against Women Health Initiative Act, legislation that will bring the resources and expertise of the health sector to bear on the persistent problem of domestic and sexual violence.

I invite you to join me today in the fight to preserve the fundamental dignity and safety of women across this great nation—a right to safety and security that should never be abrogated, and yet is under threat every day.

Every nine seconds, a woman is abused in the United States. And every year, women are subjected to 4.8 million assaults and rapes by their intimate partners. According to 2009 statistics from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, of the 1,928 women murdered, 609 were wives murdered by their husbands; and 472 were girlfriends murdered by their significant other.

While no sector of society is left untouched by violence against women, the health care system is particularly impacted by violence and abuse.

Recent studies show that abuse victims use health care services between 2 and 2.5 times that of those who are not victims of abuse. More than 20 years of research connects child and adult exposure to domestic and sexual violence to asthma, stroke, heart disease, cancer, and depression. Intimate partner rape, physical assault, and stalking costs the health care system over \$8.3 billion annually.

In this period of elevated unemployment rates, there is particular cause for concern. The rate of violence in a relationship nearly doubles when a man is unemployed at least once. The rate of violence almost triples when a man experiences multiple periods of unemployment. In this economic recession, we have to be even more vigilant to prevent violence against women.

The health care system is uniquely positioned to take a leading role in fighting and responding to the prevalence of violence.

Victims know and trust their health care providers. Almost three-quarters of survivors say that they would like their health care providers to ask them about violence and abuse.

Multiple clinical studies have shown that short interventions in the medical environment

protect the health and safety of women. These interventions are short—between two and ten minutes—and effective. In repeated clinical trials, violence decreased and health status improved following simple assessment and referral protocols. Integrating these effective protocols into our health care system will save lives.

Indeed, routine assessment for intimate partner violence has been recommended for health care settings by the American Medical Association, American Psychological Association, American Nurses Association, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Health Care Organizations.

Efforts by the health care system to prevent and respond to violence and abuse against women are built upon the success of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), first passed in 1994.

Since its passage, the Violence Against Women Act has transformed our criminal justice and social service system. Between 1993 and 2008, the rate of intimate partner violence dropped 53%. Clearly, we are on the right track.

Yet we need to do more.

Despite the commitment of the health field to help victims of violence and abuse, a critical gap remains in the delivery of health care to victims. Health care providers often only address current injuries, without tackling the underlying cause of those injuries. This highlights the need to ensure that health care providers have the necessary training and support in order to assess, refer, and support victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Today, I introduced the “Violence Against Women Health Initiative Act” as the first step in reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act, helping the health care system to become a major player in the fight against violence against women. This bill would reauthorize three health programs; changes in the legislation will prioritize evaluation and accountability, as well as to expand the types of medical stakeholders engaged in this important effort.

There should be no safe harbor for those who perpetrate domestic violence and sexual assault in the twenty-first century.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR DISASTER

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today, as we conclude legislative business for the month of April in Washington, D.C., it is appropriate that we mark an important milestone in Ukraine: On April 26th, 2011, we recognize the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

On this date in 1986, Reactor Four at the Soviet-designed Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in northern Ukraine exploded, releasing more than 100 tons of lethally radioactive material into the environment. The human cost of this disaster is staggering. It is unlikely we will ever know how many deaths can be directly

attributed to the Chernobyl disaster, but the loss of life of even one life is truly a tragedy.

Twenty-five years later, the consequences of the world's worst nuclear accident continue to plague Eastern Europe. Ukraine has been especially impacted. The World Health Organization estimates that over 6,000 people have been diagnosed with thyroid cancer from the radioactive materials in the atmosphere. The concrete and steel sarcophagus that encases the ruined Nuclear Reactor Four is deteriorating and in need of replacement. In addition, the loss of Chernobyl's generating capacity exacerbates an already difficult energy shortage in Ukraine, which depends heavily on energy imports, especially during harsh winters.

We must be mindful that Chernobyl's legacy remains a heavy burden for the people of Ukraine. The fatally flawed nuclear technology that built Chernobyl resulted in lasting harm to Ukraine's people and the environment. The sole consolation is that we can yet hope to redress the damage.

We must continue to support U.S. and international efforts to address the lingering health, social, and economic consequences from the disaster, including the permanent encasement of the damaged nuclear Reactor Four in Chernobyl. I call on every Member of the House to join with me in remembering the victims of this tragedy and to support these efforts. Let us resolve to do our part to help Ukraine build a better future.

CONGRESSMAN FRANK EVANS TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Congressman Frank Evans of Pueblo, Colorado. Mr. Evans represented Colorado's third district for 14 years and was considered one of the most professional and courteous members of the House of Representatives. In fitting tribute, Pueblo's Government Printing Office will be renamed after the Congressman next month.

Mr. Evans was responsible for bringing the distribution center to his hometown and was proud of the recognition it gave to what was, at the time, a very small town. It is a testament to his hard work while in office. He fought diligently for residents of the district and never forgot those who elected him to Congress. He enjoyed great success in office, never lost an election, and took great care to avoid making enemies on either side of the aisle.

Mr. Evans grew up in Colorado and went to Pomona College before enlisting in the Navy at the outbreak of World War II. During the War he became a pilot and flew seaplanes in the Pacific theater. After his service, he returned to Colorado and graduated from the University of Denver with a law degree. He specialized in labor law and workers' rights was one of his lifelong concerns. It prompted him, in fact, to move back to Pueblo, so that he might better understand factory life at the district's mills and plants.

In Pueblo he met his wife Eleanor Trefz, whom he loved dearly. Together they raised four children and nine grandchildren. Mr.