EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO MARY ''MITZI'' PERDUE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 13, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor Mary ''Mitzi'' Perdue for her tremendous generosity to personal charities and organizations.

Ms. Perdue was born into a life of privilege, being the daughter of Sheraton Hotel founder Ernest Henderson. With her privileged life, she decided to dedicate herself to public service and philanthropic causes. At a young age her parents instilled a sense of giving that carried with her throughout her life. One of her life mottos is, ''It's the givers of the world who are the happiest''.

Ms. Perdue pursued an education at Harvard. Upon graduation she began a career in communications writing a syndicated column on the environment, first for Capitol News in California and then for Scripps Howard, nationally. At its peak, ''The Environment and You'' went to 420 newspapers, and the total number of columns was more than 1100. The articles focused mainly on how individuals could protect the environment, but they also encouraged students to study science, so they could play a role in saving the planet.

Ms. Perdue also wrote more than 250 columns on charities for my local paper and occasionally for national magazines. The columns and articles provided recognition to the charities and let readers know about each charity's needs and services. Many of the charities couldn't afford a professional writer, and yet they needed to communicate with their supporters.

Ms. Perdue understands the importance of her philanthropic activities that if philanthropies don't develop strong bonds with their donors and volunteers, their supporters may, over time, drift away. To this extent she donates the location, the food, the beverages, the decorations, and the wait staff for parties of between 10–110 guests. In the last four years, Ms. Perdue has entertained close to 4500 people at her home. Ninety-five percent of these events have been charity-related, but some have also been book parties, since, as a (soon-to-be-former) Commissioner of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, she loves the idea of encouraging authors.

Another charitable interest of hers is supporting veterans. In the past, Perdue Farms won the nation-wide Pro Patria Award largely because her and her husband wrote personalized monthly letters to overseas Reservists.

In her life, Ms. Perdue lives by one quote by Aristotle, ''the only true success in life is to find yourself in service to the community''. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Ms. Mary ''Mitzi'' Perdue for her dedicated public service and charitable giving.

UNITED STATES-PANAMA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3079, the United States-Panama Trade Implementation Act.

OPPOSING NAFTA-STYLE TRADE POLICIES

With all the talk this Congress about addressing the deficit, you might think that Democrat and Republican supporters of these agreements would be even more concerned about a larger deficit that is responsible for the displacement of thousands of American jobs—the trade deficit.

Our rapidly increasing trade deficits with countries like China and Mexico have displaced millions of jobs over the past decade. According to Economic Policy Institute (EPI), the U.S.-China Free Trade Agreement resulted in the displacement of over 2.3 million American workers between 2001 and 2007, as a direct result of the increase in China trade deficits. U.S. producers of apparel, steel and technology (parts) have been the industries most significantly impacted by imports from China. Two-thirds of those jobs displaced were in the manufacturing sector—resulting in the outsourcing of hundreds of thousands of American jobs in the computer and electronic parts, apparel and accessories and fabricated metal production sectors.

It is these same industries that will be further affected by the proposed trade deals with Korea, Panama and Colombia.

Yet today we are considering NAFTA-style free trade agreements that are projected to continue in this tradition. Those of us who were in Congress during the debates on NAFTA and CAFTA have heard the promises of more jobs and economic opportunity from supporters of free trade. These promises have never materialized.

NAFTA's record is clear: it is negative for jobs, negative for democracy and negative for the environment.

PANAMA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT: GOOD FOR MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, BAD FOR THE RULE OF LAW

Madam Speaker, the Panama trade agreement is good for multinational corporations and bad for the rule of law.

An April 2009 report by Public Citizen on the Panama trade agreement found that it would undermine U.S. efforts to stop offshore tax-haven abuse and undermine financial regulations.

Among the key findings: some of the corporations who were the largest recipients of U.S. federal procurement contracts and money under the Troubled Asset Relief Program—including Citigroup—have dozens of subsidiaries in Panama that would be granted expansive new rights under this trade agreement. So firms that were bailed out with U.S. taxpayer dollars, like AIG and Citigroup, are being rewarded with a trade agreement that undermines U.S. efforts to stop offshore tax-haven abuse.

As Public Citizen notes, ''Panama's tiny economy provides no prospects for significant U.S. economic gains. Panama's total annual GDP is about 6 percent of Washington, D.C.'' Like NAFTA, this trade agreement includes provisions that allow investors to challenge the U.S. government in international courts—and demand U.S. taxpayer compensation—for U.S. policies that conflict with their expansive rights under the FTA to ''free transfers'' (i.e.: conflict with their bottom line).

At a time when we should be focusing on strengthening worker's rights and investing in domestic manufacturing and infrastructure and job creation, a trade deal with Panama that is unlikely to have any significant effect at all on creating jobs or increasing imports is the wrong way to go.

It is abundantly clear that this trade agreement is not about expanding opportunity for the American worker, but about expanding opportunity for multinational corporations and their subsidiaries. Just like NAFTA.

REWARDING PANAMA FOR ITS FAILURE TO ABIDE BY INTERNATIONAL TAX NORMS

With the Panama trade agreement, we are rewarding a country for failing to abide by even the minimum transparency standards for tax norms. An April 2009 tax-haven watch list by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) cites Panama as one of thirty countries that agreed to conform to international tax norms but failed to do so. The OECD reports that Panama made such a commitment in 2002 and has not since completed a single agreement to fulfill its commitment.

According to Public Citizen, Panama is ''one of only 13 countries—and the only current or prospective FTA partner—that is listed on all of the major tax-haven watchdog lists that does not also have U.S. tax transparency treaties.''

If you're still not convinced to vote against the Panama trade agreement, this laundry list from Public Citizen may help: The Panama trade agreement ''includes extreme foreign investor privileges, and offshoring protections and their private enforcement in international tribunals, limits on financial and other service sector regulation, a ban on Buy America procurement preferences, limits on environmental safeguards and imported food and product safety, and drug patent rules that limit generics.''

The AFL-CIO correctly notes that with this agreement, we are rewarding ''a country that has a history of repressing labor rights and has achieved much of its economic growth by making it easy for money launderers and tax dodgers to hide their income from legitimate authorities.''

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the Panama free trade agreement.

LABOR RIGHTS IN PANAMA

The rights of workers, which have increasingly come under attack in this country, are