EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN MEMORY OF JAMES ''JIM'' CRAIG

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of James R. ''Jim'' Craig, who passed away on December 9, 2011. Jim will long be remembered in the community of Pendleton, Indiana as an American hero and a civic leader.

Jim was born on May 30, 1923, in Noblesville to Sydney and Kathryn Craig. Since 1934, Jim called Pendleton home. After graduating from Westtown Pennsylvania Friends School in 1941, Jim went on to study at Purdue University.

During his time at Purdue, he learned of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Like many young men, Jim wanted to serve and defend his country. After enlisting in the United States Marine Corps, Jim received his commission as a Second Lieutenant. He was placed in command of the 1st Platoon, 24th Marines and saw action at Iwo Jima. Jim's platoon suffered many casualties in the battle and that had a lasting effect on him, as described in the book, The Last Lieutenant, written by his nephew Dr. John C. Shively.

Jim married his beloved Patricia Lee Carroll on October 21, 1944. In 1947, he graduated from Purdue University and went on to own Pendleton Lumber Company until 1960. He was employed at Pendleton Savings and Loan until 1978 and then worked as a real estate broker until 2000.

Jim was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Pendleton, and was very active in many civic groups and activities including the Boy Scouts of America, the Pendleton Junior Baseball League, the Madison County Community Foundation, and the South Madison Community Foundation. Jim took part in the 1964 School Reorganization, was a Salvation Army life-member, served on the Kettle Drive, the Pendleton Lions Club, and volunteered at St. John's Hospital. Jim founded the Pendleton Swim Club and was a U.S. Swimming official. Jim also was a Pendleton Chamber of Commerce member and served on the Pendleton Planning Commission.

I had the privilege of getting to know Jim as part of my duties representing the Sixth Congressional District. Jim was a fixture at town hall meetings and I will fondly remember his participation in those events.

Jim was also blessed with a wonderful, loving family. He is survived by his wife, Patricia of 67 years and their six children. Jim was blessed with sixteen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Through them, I am confident Jim's legacy will live on thanks to the lessons he instilled in those around him.

Mr. Speaker, the Bible tells us, ''The Lord is close to the brokenhearted,'' and that is my prayer for the family of Jim Craig. Let us all keep Jim and his family in our thoughts and prayers as we mark the passing of this American hero.

COMMENDING REP. NOBLE ELLINGTON UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to commend Rep. Noble Ellington, who has devoted over two decades to serving the citizens of Louisiana. His unwavering dedication and staunch support of those living in the Bayou State are deserving of our gratitude and appreciation.

Noble has served in the Louisiana Legislature since 1988, where I had my first opportunity to work alongside this devoted public servant as we both represented the people of Jackson Parish. Not only did I have the privilege of calling him a colleague for many years following, but it was there that I first had the honor of knowing him as a friend. Looking back on those years, Noble's upbeat spirit and his ability to be kind to everyone is what I remember most.

A man of many talents, Noble's career includes successful business endeavors in addition to his public service. For 40 years, he has been the owner of Noble Ellington Cotton Company, Inc., and is the director of Franklin State Bank and Franklin Cotton Warehouse.

A true product of Northeast Louisiana, Noble was raised on a farm in Richland Parish and received his education from Mangham High School and Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, La. He has made his home in Winnsboro with his wife, Brenda Armstrong, and is the proud parent of four children and five grandchildren.

He is a driving force in Louisiana for his committed leadership on various business, civic and governmental boards and committees. He currently serves as the National Chairman of the American Legislative Exchange Council resulting in positive, nationwide attention for our state.

Through his numerous accomplishments, Noble has earned the respect and regard of those with whom he has served and the gratitude of the people he has diligently represented.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending best wishes to Rep. Noble Ellington upon his retirement and wishing him future success in all his efforts.

PROMOTING GLOBAL INTERNET FREEDOM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, last week I held a hearing on global online freedom.

About 2 billion people in the world regularly communicate or get information on the Internet. Well over half a billion people do so in repressive countries. As Internet use has become a vital and even the standard means to disseminate beliefs, ideas and opinions, so we see a growing number of countries that censor or conduct surveillance on the Internet, in conflict with internationally recognized human rights laws and standards.

In 2006, I held the first major hearing on Internet freedom, in this very room, in response to Yahoo!'s turning over the personally identifying information of its e-mail account holder, Shi Tao, to the Chinese Government—who tracked him down and sentenced him to 10 years for sending abroad e-mails that revealed the details of Chinese government press controls. At that hearing Yahoo!, Google, Microsoft, and Cisco testified as to what we might ruefully call their ''worst practices'' of cooperation with the Internet police of totalitarian governments like China's. That same week I introduced the first Global Online Freedom Act, as a means to help Internet users in repressive states. In 2008 the Global Online Freedom Act was passed by three House committees.

In the last half dozen years the Internet, in many countries, has been transformed from a freedom plaza to big brother's best friend. The technologies to track, monitor, block, filter, trace, remove, attack, hack, and remotely take over Internet activity, content and users has exploded. Many of these technologies are made in the U.S.A. Many of them have important and legitimate law-enforcement applications. But, sadly, many of them are also being exported, every day, to some of the most unsavory governments in the world—whose use of them is far from legitimate. Every day we learn about more activists being arrested through the use of newly-developed technologies—much of it American technology—in China, Belarus, Egypt, Syria and many other countries around the world. The stakes are life and death for online democracy activists, and they deserve our support and protection.

For example, Belarus is blocking social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook and aggressively shutting down opposition Internet sites. Kazakhstan, which already blocks a number of popular blogs and media sites, is also in the process of creating a ''national Internet,'' where all domestic domain names will have to operate on physical servers within its borders. Syria is using sophisticated tools to limit the ability of the opposition to organize and to track down peaceful protestors. China

has created the Great Firewall and wants to create its own sanitized version of the Internet that will essentially isolate China from much of what is happening in the rest of the world. And, when protests break out, it simply shuts down the Internet, as it did in Tibet and Xinjiang in recent years.

In Vietnam, Facebook has been blocked for two years and under a new executive decree, a number of bloggers and journalists who write for independent online publications have been arrested. Egypt continues to detain blogger Alaa Abdel Fattah for his online criticisms of the Egyptian army. And today, we just learned that in addition to the already extensive online censorship in Iran, the U.S. ''virtual embassy'' in Iran has been blocked after only one day of operation.

Last week, I introduced a bill that responds to the growing use of the Internet as a tool of repression, and to changes in the technologies of repression. The new Global Online Freedom Act of 2011 (GOFA), H.R. 3605, fundamentally updates legislation that I first introduced in 2006 (and which in 2008 advanced through three House committees).

The new GOFA requires the State Department to beef up its reporting on Internet freedom in the annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices, and to identify by name Internet-restricting countries. This country designation will be useful not only in a diplomatic context in helping to advance Internet freedom through naming and shaming countries, but will also provide U.S. technology companies with the information they need in deciding how to engage in repressive foreign countries.

Second, the bill requires Internet companies listed on U.S. stock exchanges to disclose to the Securities and Exchange Commission how they conduct their human rights due diligence, including with regard to the collection and sharing of personally identifiable information with repressive countries, and the steps they take to notify users when they remove content or block access to content. This provision of the bill will help democratic activists and human rights defenders hold Internet companies accountable by creating a new transparency standard for Internet companies. This provision will also require foreign Internet service companies that are listed here in the U.S. to report this information as well—this will include such big-name Chinese companies such as Baidu, Sohu and Sina.

Finally, in response to many reports that we've all seen in the papers recently of U.S. technology being used to track down or conduct surveillance of activists through the Internet or mobile devices, this bill will prohibit the export of hardware or software that can be used for potentially illicit activities such as surveillance, tracking and blocking to the governments of Internet-restricting countries. Current export control laws do not take into account the human rights impact of these exports and therefore do not create any incentive for U.S. companies to evaluate their role in assisting repressive regimes. This section will not only help stop the sale of these items to repressive governments, but will create an important foreign policy stance for the United States that will help ensure that dissidents abroad know we are on their side, and that U.S. businesses are not profiting from this repression.

This export control law is long overdue, and thoroughly consistent with the approach Congress has taken, for example, in restricting exports of certain crime control equipment to China. It makes no sense for us to allow U.S. companies to sell technologies of repression to dictators, and then turn around and have to spend millions of dollars to develop and deploy circumvention tools and other technologies to help protect dissidents from the very technologies that U.S. companies exported to their persecutors.

Today's hearing is an important moment to take stock of where we are and how we can move forward to promote and defend Internet freedom around the world. What we do here in the United States is critically important to achieving our goals. We must send a strong message to companies that they have a unique role to play in preserving online freedom; and send an even stronger message to repressive governments that the Internet must not become a tool of repression.

HONORING MS. HORTENSE BRICE

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Hortense Brice, a dedicated teacher from my hometown of Chicago, Illinois. We can all agree, Mr. Speaker, that one of the greatest services a citizen can offer our nation is dedicating their lives to teaching the next generation. Passing wisdom, knowledge, and inspiration is the greatest gift in one of the most honorable professions.

It is in that tradition, Mr. Speaker, that Hortense Brice has dedicated her life for the last forty one years. A life dedicated not only to the education of others but to her personal education as well. She worked hard not only for her Bachelor of Science Degree from Illinois State University but also for her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Illinois at Chicago. After her Master's degree she trained for 36 hours in Science Education at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

For most people, graduating from college marks the end of their academic careers and the beginning of their financial ones. For Hortense however this was not the case. Her drive for knowledge pushed her to enroll in further workshops, conferences, and graduate-level courses in a number of scientific fields and at many respected institutions of higher learning. She did this not just for a love of learning but also, so that when teaching her pupils, she would be able to pass on an expertise and deep seated knowledge that they would not be subject to otherwise. This is exactly what she did when she created the first biotechnology curriculum in the Chicago Public School system.

To teach is to lead. Hortense Brice has embodied, and still embodies, such a principle. She created the first Biotechnology Center of Excellence at Lindblom Math and Science Academy, supporting professional development for Chicago Public School teachers. The belief that it is just as important to teach the next generation of teachers as it is the next generation of pupils was at the foundation of Hortense's work. She arranged for high school teachers from the Chicago Public Schools to enroll in a 2-year biotechnology training course at the University of Illinois, and secured a grant from the National Science Association that helped provide further training for more high school educators.

While doing all of this Hortense Brice still taught elements of biotechnology at Whitney M. Young Magnet High School, and the first full-year biotechnology course at Lindblom Math and Science Academy in Chicago, Illinois. She taught by example and her hard work ethic inside and outside the classroom served as an inspiration to pupils and colleagues alike.

With her experience and education she had a unique insight into what the education curriculum lacked and what it needed. For example, in 2006 after noticing a gap in the curriculum she worked with the After School Matters program to develop a successful pharmaceutical drug curriculum for high schools pupils.

Even with her retirement in June 2009 Hortense still continues to attend science training programs, including a five-day biotechnology immersion program held by the Biotechnology institute at the BIO International Convention. Though her teaching career is over her pursuit of knowledge will never be. It is this love of knowledge that has made her such an inspirational teacher and educational advocate. It is why she was recognized as an outstanding educator, researcher and trainer for the next generation of young scientists by the iBio Institute, who gave her the Knowledge Builder Award for grades 6–12. It is the very same reason why I am speaking about her today.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that to be ignorant is to be left in the darkness, the only thing that can conquer such darkness is the light of education. Hortense Brice embodies such a light.

It is for that reason that I rise today to recognize Hortense Brice for her dedication to the teaching of advanced science in high school students in the Chicago Public Schools and to congratulate her on her retirement.

RECOGNITION OF GREGORY C. BRADY UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor and pay tribute to Gregory C. Brady, a fellow Nebraskan and the Principal Deputy General Counsel for the Office of Justice Programs, in the U.S. Department of Justice, who is retiring after forty-six years of remarkable public service in the interests of justice. His tireless dedication to the multi-faceted work of the Department, reflected in his many career accomplishments, have earned him great respect and recognition in the Office of Justice Programs and its component agencies, and throughout the Department and among his fellow attorneys at bar. I want to take a moment to memorialize his extraordinary and inspiring accomplishments.

Greg Brady was born and reared in Nebraska, graduating from the University of Nebraska in 1962, with a Bachelor of Arts degree, and in 1965, with a Juris Doctorate.

Thereafter, Mr. Brady served a three-year tour of duty in the Judge Advocate General Corps of the U.S. Navy (from which, after prosecuting and defending scores of cases, he was honorably discharged with the rank of Lieutenant). Mr. Brady began his service with the Department of Justice in December 1968, as an Assistant United States Attorney in the District of Columbia, and has been continuously serving the Department of Justice, and the public, faithfully and in an exemplary manner ever since.

In the United States Attorney's Office, he demonstrated his flexibility of mind and zealous devotion to duty in countless criminal (misdemeanors, felonies, grand juries, etc.) and civil cases that he litigated, at the trial and appellate levels, many of which cases involved groundbreaking questions of law. Mitchell v. Laird, for example, 488 F.2d 611 (D.C. Cir. 1973), was brought unsuccessfully by thirteen members of the U.S. House of Representatives to enjoin the involvement of U.S. military personnel in the Vietnam conflict, and involved complex Constitutional questions of standing, executive prerogative, and justiciability. United States v. Crowder, 543 F.2d 312 (D.C. Cir. 1976)—which Mr. Brady's arguments (opposed by those of Mr. Robert Bennett) initially won at the District Court, then lost before a Circuit Court panel, and then won in an en banc proceeding of the Circuit Court—was the first case in the country to approve use of a search warrant to require a suspect to submit to surgery so the police could obtain a bullet as evidence of his criminal activity. (The case against Crowder (a two-time murderer) for the murder of a prominent Washington dentist was considered weak, because the only evidence known to the police that could link him firmly to the earlier crime were the bullets lodged in his arm and leg, from his murder-victim's gun. It was Mr. Brady's idea to try to obtain a search warrant for the bullets; he also thought of the stratagem of deputizing the (anxious) physicians from Georgetown University Hospital as U.S. Marshals for purposes of the surgery. Judge McGowan's concurrence (as does Judge Leventhal's dissent) goes out of its way to praise Mr. Brady's prosecution for the procedural orderliness and fair play it consistently demonstrated in the case. The case was featured in a Time magazine article.) This kind of legal creativity and strict adherence to the rule of law remains typical of Mr. Brady, nearly thirty of whose cases are officially reported in the published court records.

Having attained the rank of Deputy Chief of the Appellate Division at the United States Attorney's Office here in the City, Mr. Brady began his career with the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (the predecessor agency to the Office of Justice Programs) in February 1974, formally in the Office of the General Counsel, but actually detailed to assist in the creation and development of grant and support programs to assist States in improving the management of prosecution offices, combating career criminals, and reducing white-collar crime. His prosecutorial experience in the Navy and the United States Attorney's Office made him invaluable to the program, which, itself, is at the heart of the core mission of the Office of Justice Programs. In 1980 (at his request), Mr. Brady returned to the direct practice of law, in the agency's Office of the General Counsel, dispensing advice and rendering opinions on countless matters relating to every conceivable area of administrative law.

In 1984, on account of his vast practical and administrative experience, he was asked to found, and become the first Director of, a new Office of Justice Programs component, which eventually was to become the Office for Victims of Crime—a signal initiative of President Reagan's administration. And he did found that office, on firm and sound lines, co-authoring what eventually was enacted as the Victim Compensation and Assistance Act of 1984 (Pub. L. 98–473), which clearly sets forth the purposes and organic principles of the office—purposes and principles that remain in place today. His mission at that office accomplished, some three years later, the leadership of the Office of Justice Programs acquiesced in Mr. Brady's request to return to its Office of the General Counsel, where he has served ever since.

He has been the principal ethics officer at the Office of Justice Programs since 1988 (in which capacity he has provided excellent guidance, training, and advice to the General Counsel, Presidential appointees, and career employees, alike), and in 1996 became the Deputy General Counsel, after having served for years as Associate General Counsel; he became Principal Deputy General Counsel in 2001.

For the last twenty-four years, Mr. Brady has applied a firm sense of purpose and integrity to instructing numberless Department employees in how to negotiate the minefields of ethical situations associated with administration of a multi-billion-dollar-a-year grant-making operation. At a time when the corporate world has endured significant ethical and moral lapses, Mr. Brady's personal efforts consistently have guided officials of the Department with a minimum of public conflict or scandal, and with the result that there is a clear public perception—necessary to the success of any government program—of even-handedness in the administration of the Office of Justice Programs' criminal-justice grant programs.

Mr. Brady's love of the law and its practitioners in the legal profession manifested itself in his generous devotion of time and attention to mentoring law students and newly-minted attorneys during the critical development stages of their careers. As Deputy General Counsel over the past twenty years, he has guided (even shepherded) them, with his approachable, kindly, and affable manner. His deep understanding and wide experience in the law made him an inspiring and effective teacher. Mr. Brady genuinely delighted in seeing the progress and development of attorneys, and their embrace of the highest standards of the legal profession; and the number and variety of law firms and government agencies that have been affected by individuals originally trained by him is impressive. (These include an Assistant Attorney General, as well as the Executive Director of a Government Corporation and a past Presidential appointee responsible for juvenile-justice issues.) In the Office of the General Counsel, he has demonstrated outstanding legal research, presentation, and advocacy skills, and has been a true role model for all of the attorneys, greatly assisting in their professional development.

And "role model" is, in fact, the apt term: for Mr. Brady is no one-dimensional work-is-my-life attorney. Despite his aggressive work schedule, he has lived his vocation as a family man (he is the father of three adored daughters and grandfather to two no-less-adored granddaughters) to the full, and his community has known that he can be depended upon to volunteer his time for others. To give but one example: For over twenty years, he has been a night-time volunteer (i.e., after putting in a full-day's work) at a crisis/suicide hotline in Prince William County, Virginia. In 2001, he was named their "Exceptional Volunteer of the Year." His tireless volunteer work in his community and parish have earned him numerous Attorney-General commendations over the years.

It is no small thing to stress that Mr. Brady has performed all of these tasks with unfailing courtesy, professionalism, and kindness (to say nothing of his ever-present humor and sharp wit). The long and short of it is that Mr. Brady simply is someone who, quietly and unassumingly, has kept the Department of Justice (and especially the Office of Justice Programs) running. Although his career in the Department hardly has been typical (at least in that it does not mostly involve litigation), Mr. Brady epitomizes the ideal of a Department of Justice attorney. For this reason, he has received both the Attorney General's Mary C. Lawton Lifetime Service Award (one of the Department's very highest awards), as well as the Office of Justice Programs' Assistant Attorney General's Lifetime Achievement Award. And for his years of dedicated public service, he received a personal commendation from President George W. Bush.

Gregory C. Brady has dedicated his professional life to public service, and his many accomplishments during the forty-six years of that professional life are a credit to him, to his family, to his home State of Nebraska, to the Department of Justice, and to his local community of which he is such an active, generous, and vibrant member.

TO CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF SIMONE "SAM" SAVIA

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Simone "Sam" Savia, who passed away peacefully on December 9, 2011, surrounded by his beloved family, after seven decades of service to his local volunteer fire department.

Sam, a lifelong resident of Vienna, Virginia, was born in the mid 1920's. He grew up a few steps away from the original fire station in Vienna where he and his brothers were frequent visitors. In 1941, Sam, then 15, joined the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department (VVFD), which had lowered the age requirement to address a manpower shortage created when most of the town's young men had been called to serve in WWII.

When Sam joined the VVFD, the town bore little resemblance to the bustling commercial and residential area it is today. There were no fire hydrants, as the town did not yet have water or sewer service, and the department's pumper truck would pull water from ponds, streams or one of the town's three cisterns. Sam recalled during an interview earlier this

year with the Fairfax Times that there was no county fire training academy in those days so he and his fellow volunteers learned the ''hard way'' by trial and error on the job.

Sam selflessly served on the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department for 70 years. He held numerous leadership positions including Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President, multiple terms as President, and multiple terms as a member of the Board of Directors. Responding to innumerable emergency calls over many decades, it is impossible to calculate the number of lives and properties he helped save. As a life member of the VVFD, Sam continued to actively perform various administrative jobs in the department after he retired from operational duty.

Sam also contributed greatly to other community causes. In the early years of the station, the VVFD sponsored the Old Dominion Baseball League and Sam was instrumental in the construction of Waters Field. After the VVFD stopped sponsoring baseball, the Vienna Host Lions Club in 1954 called on Sam to organize little league baseball in the town. Sam set up the program, coached teams, and helped construct the necessary fields. The Jessup-Savia Field at Nottoway honors Sam in recognition to his tremendous contributions to little league and youth in Vienna.

Sam also served as president of the Vienna Lions Club and on the Vienna Centennial Coordinating Committee. In recognition of his years of service to the community, Sam was named the 2006 Citizen of the Year by the Vienna-Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce.

On July 25, 2011, the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department hosted a ceremony honoring Sam for his seven decades of service to the Department. During this ceremony, July 25, 2011 was proclaimed Sam Savia Day by the Town of Vienna in recognition of his contributions to the community, and the Commonwealth of Virginia followed suit by approving House Joint Resolution 5170 commending Sam for his service. The department also renamed its apparatus building the Sam Savia Apparatus Facility so future generations of firefighters and citizens in Vienna will remember this man who dedicated his life to public safety, his family, and his community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me to celebrate the life and deeds of Sam Savia, and to express our deepest condolences to his wife Gertrude, their children, and their entire family.

FARM DUST REGULATION PREVENTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1633) to establish a temporary prohibition against revising any national ambient air quality standard applicable to coarse particulate matter, to limit Federal regulation of nuisance dust in areas in which such dust is regulated under State, tribal, or local law, and for other purposes:

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I rise to strongly oppose H.R. 1633, the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act. Regrettably, the House Republican majority is choosing to waste precious floor time debating this political statement instead of allowing a vote on President Obama's American Jobs Act.

Contrary to the claims of my Republican colleagues, H.R. 1633 has nothing to do with job creation or economic growth. This legislation addresses a nonexistent issue since the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated repeatedly it has no intention of regulating ''farm dust.''

However, it cannot be said that H.R. 1633 would have no effect. This legislation creates new loopholes that allow open-pit mines, gravel mines, smelters and coal-processing facilities to escape public-health protections under the Clean Air Act. Enactment of this legislation would result in more pollution leading to more premature deaths, asthma attacks, respiratory disease and heart attacks. House Republicans say they are standing up for family farmers when in fact they are aiding corporate polluters.

While the Minnesota family farmers I have heard from have serious challenges, they assure me that farm dust is far down on their list of priorities. Their real concerns relate to rising costs for seed, fertilizer, land, rent and machinery. They worry about protecting their land for the next generation in the face of federal cuts to conservation programs. They struggle with consolidation in the agricultural sector and the ability of the biggest farms to expand at the expense of smaller ones. Political debates in Washington about farm dust are not a factor in their lives.

H.R. 1633 is just another veiled Republican assault on our nation's landmark clean air laws. I urge my colleagues to reject this bill and return our attention to the real problems that are impacting job growth in our economy.

MAYOR CHARLES CROWLEY RETIRES AFTER A JOB VERY WELL DONE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on December 27th, Mayor Charles Crowley of the city of Taunton will be chairing his last City Council meeting. It has been a great privilege and pleasure for me during the last four years and nine months to work with Mayor Crowley, as the Member of the U.S. House of Representatives for the city of Taunton. Officially, he is an extremely thoughtful and creative chief executive, who combines a capacity to do serious policy analysis with important management skills. We have collaborated on a number of issues important to the city of Taunton, involving transportation, housing, and economic development, and I have found it easy to represent the city under Charlie Crowley's mayoralty, because he does his homework in a way that makes being the advocate for the city he presides over easy.

For someone who is interested in history, talking with Charlie Crowley is always fascinating. Mayor Crowley is a first-rate historian, and I have rarely been with him dealing with a particular policy when I haven't learned something relevant and interesting about the history of the events or the place we are addressing.

Charlie Crowley has been a friend as well as a colleague. He retires entitled to a sense of satisfaction about the great job he has done—especially in an era when being Mayor of a city is one of the hardest jobs around.

URGING TURKEY TO SAFEGUARD ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

SPEECH OF

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I'm thinking about why Congress is raising the issue of Christian properties in Turkey at a time when that country has already addressed these concerns. It is very unfortunate that at a time when our country is facing so many challenges, that we are focusing on an issue that should be settled internally by a foreign country. I strongly support religious freedom but this is not an appropriate issue for the United States Congress to be involved in.

Last August, while Congress was in recess, the Turkish Government took the decision to return to non-Muslim community foundations the immovable properties registered in the name of Turkish public institutions, or compensate (at market rates) those foundations if such properties are held by third parties.

Secretary Clinton publicly praised and ''applauded'' Turkey and Prime Minister Erdogan for this ''serious step to improve the climate for religious tolerance'' during a briefing on the release of State Department International Religious Freedom Report. The Report itself emphasizes Turkey's ''steps to improve religious freedom.'' Furthermore, during the American Turkish Council 2011 Annual Conference, Secretary Clinton said: ''I was particularly impressed by Prime Minister Erdogan's statement during Ramadan that property would be returned to religious minority groups, and we also hope to see other positive steps, such as reopening of the Halki Seminary.''

The simple truth is that we shouldn't single out one country when we know there are similar issues throughout the world. If we're going to be involved with calling attention to the faults of one country, we are setting a dangerous precedent where the House of Representatives can be distracted by focusing on the problems existing anywhere else in the world. We need to be promoting religious freedom and tolerance all over the world and this resolution does not accomplish that goal. A better use of our time and energy would be for all of us to foster stronger bilateral relations with all of our allies.

CAMP ASHRAF

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Camp Ashraf is a small little camp in Iraq made up of a few thousand Iranian freedom fighters. They are unarmed civilians who, like us, don't like the tiny tyrant in the desert.

But the Camp is under siege.

PM Maliki wants to close the camp by December 31.

If the Camp is closed, many of the residents could be killed.

You see, Iraqi soldiers can't be trusted. In 2009 and 2011, they killed dozens of innocent civilians in the Camp.

Now Iran is promising all sorts of goodies if Iraq closes down the Camp.

Iran hates anyone who disagrees with its regime, so it wants nothing better than to have all these people in the Camp forcibly removed and eliminated.

But there is one tiny problem with Iran and Iraq's dirty little scheme: The world is watching.

Since the massacres, Camp residents have applied for UNHCR political refugee status.

It will take the U.N. 6 months to process their applications.

The U.N. Secretary General just wrote me yesterday to say that he has personally encouraged Maliki to not close the Camp down.

Sixty-five of my colleagues asked President Obama to raise this issue when he met with PM Maliki yesterday—we don't know if he did or not.

Maliki could be tried with war crimes if there is a New Year's massacre.

It should be the official policy of the United States to urge the government of Iraq to protect the residents, not return them to Iran, and not close the Camp until the U.N. can finish its political refugee process.

I am thankful to the Chair and Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs committee for their support of this policy.

We cannot allow Maliki to once again slaughter innocent civilians.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING THE MORTGAGE-BURNING SERVICE AT LITTLE UNION BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Little Union Baptist Church, in Dumfries, Virginia, on the occasion of its June 11, 2011, "Mortgage-Burning Service."

The Deed for the first site of Little Union Baptist Church was signed on September 9, 1901, a gift of the land from John Thomas and Mary Bates Thomas to church trustees. For Mary Bates Thomas in particular, this gift represented a great achievement in the life of a truly amazing woman. Mary Bates was born into slavery in Northern Virginia. As a slave, Ms. Bates learned to read and write and participated in the camp meetings praising God and maintaining her undying faith in the face of such great hardship.

Following emancipation, Mary Bates Thomas became a pillar of her community, running a small general store with her husband John Thomas, reading and writing letters for the illiterate, and acting as a healer and midwife. Recognizing the need of her community for a church of its own, Mary Bates Thomas and her husband donated the land on which the church, which would come to be known as Little Union Baptist, was built. Its diminutive name may have reflected its intimate membership early on, but the church acted as a focal point of the community and a great source of comfort and pride in times of both joy and difficulty.

In over one hundred years of serving the community, the Little Union family has grown in size, yet its mission, handed down from Mrs. Bates Thomas to the church leadership and today through the guidance of Reverend James Green, has always remained: "to establish a fellowship in Jesus Christ that will promote the Gospel throughout the community and the world."

Mary Bates Thomas would surely be proud to see what her church has become. Due to the generosity of the congregation, the able leadership of the church, and God's grace, today we may celebrate Little Union Baptist's satisfaction of its mortgage. Now in complete ownership of its house of worship, the church will be able use its resources in even greater support of other outreach ministries.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the "Mortgage Burning Service" for Little Union Baptist Church. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Little Union church family for establishing and maintaining a healthy house of worship that spreads the spirit of charity and provides counsel to those in need of guidance.

URGING TURKEY TO SAFEGUARD ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, as a strong supporter of religious freedom, I share the desire of many of my colleagues that our international relationships and foreign policy should reflect our values. A legacy of intolerance and violent conflict is still palpable in Turkey, decades after the upheavals and population transfers that took place as the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Greeks, Armenians, Assyrians, and others still live with this legacy, and for many decades Turkey's government failed to account for it or to take any steps to recognize it.

Yet, Turkey is undergoing profound and very hopeful changes today. The current Turkish leadership demonstrates an understanding of these changes. They are challenging entrenched, conservative orthodoxies and facing the past in ways that I believe we should encourage. That is why I cannot support the resolution before us today. It is out of step with the reality of today's Turkey, the U.S.-Turkish alliance, and the political realities in the Eastern Mediterranean.

I am concerned that H. Res. 306 would not only send the wrong signal, it would cause the deterioration of a relationship with an important ally without advancing the laudable goal of religious freedom.

The fact is, the Turkish government is moving in the right direction on this issue, and of their own accord. Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey announced last August that his government would return hundreds of properties that were confiscated from religious minorities by the state or other parties since 1936, and would pay compensation for properties that were seized and later sold.

I don't think such a gesture should be repaid by a sense of Congress that claims that "the Republic of Turkey has been responsible for the destruction and theft of much of the Christian heritage within its borders" and which accuses our strongest Muslim ally of "official and unofficial acts of discrimination, intolerance, and intimidation." This is a government that has fought beside our soldiers in Afghanistan, and has provided training, overflight and logistical support that have been critical to the United States in Iraq.

While we debate this resolution, we can't ignore the fact that Turkey has taken important steps forward regarding civil and political rights, and is even now developing a new constitution to reflect Turkey's diverse society and its aspirations to become a more active member of the global community. This orientation should be encouraged. The resolution before us, in my view, does nothing to encourage Turkey on that path, regardless of what its backers are claiming.

Only in the last few months, Turkey has taken some very difficult and controversial steps that support the foreign policy of the United States. Perhaps the best example, and least well-known, is in Libya. While U.S. and N.A.T.O. forces were protecting Libyan civilians from a depraved dictator, the Republic of Turkey agreed to serve as a "protecting power" on behalf of the United States. In that capacity they represented the United States in Libya, including acting as consular officers on behalf of U.S. citizens in Libya and looking after American diplomatic facilities in the country. They also fully supported our goal of protecting the Libyan opposition, and pledged financial and material support to NATO to bring about a free, democratic, secure, stable, and united Libya. Is this how we repay them?

Another example of Turkey's positive role in the Mediterranean region is their government's decision to host a U.S. radar warning system in the southeastern region of the country. This is a landmark agreement for the alliance. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen called the installation a "critical contribution" to the Alliance's efforts to address the growing threat of proliferation. This effort is not inconsistent with Turkey's leadership on issues of international security—only last month Turkey hosted an important international security conference on Afghanistan, and Turkey continues to participate in military and civilian efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

And Turkey has also demonstrated a willingness to challenge undemocratic and despotic neighbors, despite the risk to its own economic interests. The Turkish government has imposed sanctions on the Assad regime in Syria, and erected trade barriers that will make it harder for the dictatorship to remain in place. And the Erdogan government has also distanced itself from Iran by pushing for secular, democratic governments in Egypt, Tunisia and Syria. These are not easy steps for the Turkish government to take—Iran and Syria account for much of Turkey's eastern border and a large part of its trade. But they are pushing ahead, because they share our concern for democratic values. Turkey's government is showing that there can be no real peace without moral principles.

The resolution before us seems utterly ignorant of these critical developments. I cannot

support it, despite my profound wish that Turkey fully embrace the full diversity represented within its borders. Further, I would like to see the current government of Turkey—as well as the governments of Greece and Armenia—fully and fairly recognize the enduring pain that conflict and hatred have wrought in its territory. I feel that under Prime Minister Erdogan, that process of acceptance and accountability has begun. We in the United States Congress can support a process of authentic reconciliation, and we should.

Turkey is our strong ally and friend. By shoring up our friendship, we can have discussions about the shortcomings we see in our ally. But this resolution fails to meet the basic standard of an enduring alliance, and therefore must oppose it.

THE WATER FOR THE WORLD ACT OF 2012

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as America prepares for the holiday season, it is important to pause and reflect on what we can do for others as well as ourselves. I hope that Congress will give a gift of life, health and hope by helping people around the world with something that most Americans take for granted: safe drinking water.

Nearly 900 million of the world's poorest don't have clean drinking water, and fully 2.6 billion lack access to improved sanitation. This shortfall poses a significant challenge for development and security around the world, reinforcing a cycle of poverty and instability that represents both a humanitarian disaster and a national security threat.

Water-related diseases are particularly brutal in how they target children: 90% of all deaths caused by diarrheal diseases are children under 5 years of age, mostly in developing countries. In all, 1.8 million children under the age of 5 die every year, more than from AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined. The economic impacts are devastating: inadequate sanitation in India alone costs that country $53.8 billion, or 6.4 percent of its GDP every year.

What's more, dirty water directly affects every area of development. Children cannot attend school if they are sick from dirty water, and adults suffering from water-borne illnesses overwhelm hospitals and cannot go to work. Hours spent looking for and collecting clean water mean hours not spent adding to a family's economic well-being. In short, the best intentioned efforts at development fail if the basic necessity of clean water is not met.

In this period of good tidings, there is good news with water. The solution to this problem is cheap and relatively straightforward. We don't have to spend millions searching for a cure. Sometimes something as simple as teaching the value of hand washing, or providing access to technology we already have is all it takes to save millions of lives and increase economic development. What we lack is leadership and accountability.

It's time for Congress to act again. The Water for the World Act of 2012 builds on current U.S. efforts to provide those in need with greater access to clean water and sanitation. And in this period of tight budgets, it is important that the Water for the World Act doesn't ask for any increase in funding, but rather improves the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of international aid programs. Given the strains on federal resources and the depth of need, it is essential that we are able to target our efforts more efficiently.

The Water for the World Act also gives the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development the tools needed to leverage the investments they are already making by elevating the current positions within the State Department and USAID to coordinate the diplomatic policy of the U.S. on global freshwater issues and to implement country-specific water strategies.

There is nothing more fundamental to the human condition and global health than access to clean water and sanitation. More needs to be done, and it needs to be done well. Taxpayers are rightly demanding better results and greater transparency from foreign aid. This bill provides the tools and incentives to do just that.

URGING TURKEY TO SAFEGUARD ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

SPEECH OF

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on H. Res. 306, urging the Republic of Turkey to safeguard its Christian heritage and to return confiscated church properties.

I believe that it is important for Secretary Clinton to discuss issues of religious freedom and equality with her Turkish counterparts, but I regret that Congress often fails to acknowledge the rapidly developing situation in Turkey, where the relationship between religion and state is evolving in positive and dynamic ways.

As a devout Christian and American, I believe that all religions should be treated equally, with dignity and respect, both here in the United States and abroad, and as such, I wish the resolution before us today would have offered a more balanced perspective, acknowledging the positive steps taken by the Turkish government.

Turkey is home to many faiths, and I believe that Turks take questions and concerns about religious freedom and equality very seriously. Turks are no strangers to religious restrictions, discrimination and prejudice, which confront many of their communities abroad.

I would like to commend the government of Turkey for its recent reform of The Law on Foundations, which enables the return of or compensation for immovable properties significant to religious minority communities. Congress should also acknowledge that Turkey has preserved or restored many sites of importance to religious minorities in recent years, and we should encourage the continuation of this important work.

I applaud the Turkish government for easing restrictions on the Greek Orthodox community and the Ecumenical Patriarch, initiatives that have been welcomed by the Hellenic communities in Turkey and the United States and improved relations between Turkey and Greece.

In another example of forward movement that Congress has yet to recognize, the Armenian Orthodox Patriarch led worship services in the historic Armenian church on Akhtamar Island near Van for the first time since World War I, attended by thousands of pilgrims from Turkey and abroad.

Congress should welcome Prime Minister Erdogan's commitment to return property to religious minority communities and recognize Turkey's status as a majority Muslim, democratic, secular state where all religions are equal.

The latest International Religious Freedom Report published by the State Department lists areas where the Turkish government has made significant advances, while calling for improvements in areas such as the reopening of the Halki Seminary on the island of Heybeli.

Further improvement is always possible, and as Turkey moves forward with constitutional reform efforts, I am confident that this process will recognize religious freedom, equality and plurality as universal values that should be upheld in every corner of the world.

SUDAN PRESS CONFERENCE

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit remarks I delivered at a Sudan press conference today hosted by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

SUDAN PRESS CONFERENCE,

1 P.M., DECEMBER 14, 2011, RAYBURN FOYER

We are surrounded today by photos which convey a dark but familiar story—Sudanese people, brutalized, marginalized and terrorized by their own government.

And yet, it seems this same regime has been afforded the privilege of legal representation in Washington by the Obama administration.

Earlier this week, I was outraged to learn that the genocidal government of Sudan led by Omar Hassan Bashir—an internationally indicted war criminal—now has a lawyer, Mr. Bart Fisher, on retainer in Washington.

According to a news report in Africa Intelligence, Mr. Fisher was hired with the express purpose of trying ''to lift American sanctions against it.''

In documentation posted on the Department of Justice Web site, it appears that Mr. Fisher was granted a license by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) at Treasury to provide this representation and that he plans to engage in political activities, among them, ''Representations (including petitions) . . . to U.S. government agencies regarding sanctions . . .''

If true, I am appalled that this has been permitted and can't help but wonder if Mr. Fisher's political contributions were a factor. The administration should reverse this approval.

Martin Luther King famously said, ''In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.''

I can't help but wonder what the people of Sudan are thinking at this particular juncture when the administration struggles to find its voice on their behalf, while at the same time seemingly empowering the voice of their oppressors.

Would we even dream of allowing Milosevic, Karadzic or Gaddafi to have representation in the nation's capital?

Bashir's crimes are well-known and documented. This is the same man that is accused by the International Criminal Court of five counts of crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, torture, extermination, and two counts of war crimes.

I've been to Sudan five times, including in July 2004 when Senator Sam Brownback and I were the first congressional delegation to go to Darfur. We spoke with women who had been raped just days earlier.

The Arab janjaweed militias, armed by Khartoum, told these women that they wanted to make ''lighter skinned babies.''

In addition to horrific human rights abuses and crimes committed by Bashir and his National Congress Party (NCP), Sudan remains on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. It is well known that the same people currently in control in Khartoum gave safe haven to Osama bin Laden in the early 1990s. Moreover, Khartoum was a revolving door for Hamas and other designated terrorist groups.

But Bashir's crimes are not merely at thing of the past as we will hear in greater detail today. At a recent Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission hearing on the crisis in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states in Sudan, former Member of Congress and President of United to End Genocide, Tom Andrews, spoke about his experiences while visiting the region.

He said that there were reports of, ''Sudanese armed forces and their allied militias going door to door targeting people based upon their religion, and based upon the color of their skin.''

Let me repeat that . . . people were being targeted for killing based upon their religion and the color of their skin.

According to the USCIRF delegation that recently visited Sudan and met with refugees in Yida camp, all of the pastors with whom they spoke said they fled Southern Kordofan after learning that the Sudanese military was undertaking house searches for Christians and SPLM–N supporters.

If this were happening in southern France, the world would be outraged. The world would take action. And yet, this story rarely features above the fold.

We stand just blocks from a museum that cries out ''Never Again.'' Meanwhile, it appears that this administration is complicit in allowing the genocidaire Bashir an advocate in Washington.

Which begs the question, who lobbies for the people whose faces are represented in this room?

Yesterday I wrote the president along with the Departments of State Treasury and Justice requesting immediate clarification about this matter and will continue to press them—just as I have done during previous administrations.

I am submitting this correspondence and relevant information into the Congressional Record for all to see.

We must not be silent in the face of this injustice.

If President Obama, Secretary Clinton and Secretary Geithner stand by and allow this to happen, history will be their judge.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA—PRINCE WILLIAM

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th Anniversary of Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William.

Founded in 1991 by local librarian Dona Swanson to help teach a library patron to read, Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William has since grown to 300 volunteers and 600 students. Despite its impressive growth, LVA-PW has maintained its direct service approach, providing individualized adult literacy tutoring based on the personal needs and goals of adult learners seeking to improve their education and employment skills. LVA-PW's programs are well-researched and constantly tracked and evaluated by staff to ensure their effectiveness. This has proven to be a highly successful model; in 2010, LVA-PW's adult learners received a total of 12,000 hours of instruction, with nearly 80% achieving at least one of their personal goals.

Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William has established itself as an institution in the community, fostering local partnerships to strengthen both their own services and those of other community groups, including the Prince William County Library System, the Virginia Employment Center, Northern Virginia Community College, the Prince William County Adult Education Program, and local businesses through workplace literacy programs. Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William has additionally been recognized in the past as Community Service Organization of the Year by the Prince William Regional Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer Organization of the Quarter by Prince William County, and Friday's Hero by the local Channel 9 News. Most recently, LVA-PW Executive Director Kim Sells received the Nancy Jiranek Award for Outstanding Virginia Adult Literacy Executive Director from the Virginia Literacy Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the 20th Anniversary of Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William. I also express my gratitude to LVA-PW's volunteer tutors and trainers, Board of Directors, and staff for helping to empower members of the community by increasing life skills and workforce potential through literacy.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3630, MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this closed rule, particularly because it does not allow for a Democratic substitute for critical year end legislation.

In a Democratic substitute we would have included a permanent repeal of the flawed physician payment formula in Medicare replacing it with a ten-year freeze. Each year members promise to look into this formula and address it—to provide certainty and stability for America's seniors in accessing their doctors. The House passed health reform bill did exactly that. Unfortunately it did not become law, but the Republicans did not even try to solve this problem. They did not offer legislation or have markups. The Republican bill punts the question for another 2 years.

In a Democratic substitute we would have included the Wireless Innovation and Public Safety Broadband Act that Representatives ESHOO and I sponsored. It keeps many of the same policy goals as the Republican legislation, but it would not undermine public safety by erecting a faulty governance model for a public safety broadband network, nor would it mandate the premature return of spectrum utilized for mission critical voice communications. The substitute also would have allowed the FCC necessary discretion to preserve unlicensed spectrum uses that preserve innovation and benefit consumers as well as protect consumers from monopolies.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not have included the poison pill of the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline provision.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not be asking modest income seniors and individuals with disabilities to foot the bill for tax relief—that's just robbing Peter to pay Paul. Seniors making over $85,000 a year are already paying more for Medicare. High income earners already pay more all their lives for Medicare through the Medicare payroll tax which has no cap. The changes in the Republican bill restructure the Medicare program in problematic ways to pay for short term extensions.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not be creating an additional 170,000 uninsured people by increasing costs on working class individuals through the health care tax credit and subsidies in the Affordable Care Act.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not be taking the shortsighted step of reducing our commitment to public health and prevention activities. These activities help to prevent diseases like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and obesity and can lower healthcare costs over the long run.

The Democratic substitute would be a fair extension of important programs and would be paid for by the withdrawal and downsizing of troops overseas through the overseas contingency fund.

MARKING THE END OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of this great day in American history—the day that marks the end of the Iraq war. Although for years we all hoped and prayed that this day would come, there is an overwhelming feeling of relief when hope becomes a reality. Today we stand together as a nation and rejoice as we look forward to the return of thousands of men and women whose countless sacrifices, remarkable service, and enormous achievements in the name of our great Nation will never be forgotten.

Nearly 1.5 million Americans served in the war in Iraq, with 30,000 wounded and nearly 4,500 casualties. In my district, we suffered the loss of 12 remarkable servicemen. We remember Long Beach residents: Pfc. Stephen A. Castellano; Sgt. 1st Class Randy D. Collins; Sgt. Anthony J. Davis, Jr.; Sgt. Israel Garcia; Pvt. Ernesto R. Guerra; Pfc. Lyndon A. Marcus, Jr.; Spec. Roberto L. Martinez Salazar; Spec. Astor A. SunsinPineda; Pfc.

David T. Toomalatai; Pfc. George D. Torres; and Staff Sgt. Joshua Whitaker, as well as Carson resident Pfc. Daniel P. Cagle of Carson who were all killed in action.

Perhaps the most consequential victory of the War on Terror came earlier this year when Osama bin Laden's life was finally ended by a group of Navy SEALs who deftly carried-out a covert operation at bin Laden's secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. I am extremely thankful for President Obama and his Administration's firm leadership in the effort to bring bin Laden to justice. With a renewed sense that justice has been served, we must return our focus now to protecting our citizens at home, and assuring our veterans a prosperous future.

As President Obama said earlier today ''It's important for us to express our thanks in words, but it's even more for us to express our thanks in deeds.'' It is now our turn to stand up for our troops at home as they courageously stood up for us in battle.

Our troops are returning home to a tough economy. They are returning home to an unemployment rate for veterans that is 2.5% higher than the national average. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to put aside our differences and come together in our commitment to ensure veterans returning home receive all the resources they need. No measure of action we take in Congress can ever truly repay our troops for their sacrifices, but I vow to do all that I can to ensure that the country they fought and sacrificed for gives back to them all that they deserve.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, while keeping the American people safe should always be our top priority, now we must refocus our priorities and our resources into protecting our homeland, educating, training and employing the American workforce, and ensuring our veterans a prosperous future in the nation they fought to defend. Over the last ten years, American taxpayers have spent billions rebuilding Iraq. We must now be willing to make the same investment of time and resources to rebuild our economy so that it provides a standard of living and quality of life worthy of the heroic sacrifices made by the men and women who risked their lives to defend our way of life and freedom.

RECOGNIZING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 200th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia.

Freemasonry has been active in the United States for over two hundred and fifty years. Since its founding in 1811, the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia has encouraged interaction and discourse among individuals of differing beliefs by promoting community service, civic responsibility, and civil debate.

The Grand Lodge of D.C. has participated in the development and strengthening of our national institutions of government, including the United States Congress and Judiciary, Presidency, and Executive Branch Agencies, as well as the Capital's historic landmarks such as the White House, Smithsonian Institution, Washington Monument, and Washington National Cathedral. The Grand Lodge of D.C. has been greatly involved with the enrichment of Washington, D.C., with members establishing prominent institutions such as the Corcoran Gallery and George Washington University, and has been actively engaged in charitable projects. The Masonic Foundation of DC has provided tens of thousands of dollars each year in financial scholarships to college students who attended D.C. public schools. Participation in numerous community service projects include Hands on DC, Adams Morgan Day, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Doctors Without Borders, So Others May Eat, St. Baldrick's Foundation for childhood cancer research, DC Community of Hope, DC Central Kitchen, and DC Special Olympics.

The Grand Lodge of D.C. has been involved domestically and abroad in countries such as Armenia, Cuba, and the Philippines. It also hosted the 2008 World Conference of Masonic Grand Lodges, the largest gathering of Masonic leaders in history, to discuss ways to build a global civil society.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia. For 200 years, the Grand Lodge of D.C. has supported the Freemasonry founding principles of ''Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth,'' and continues to do so today, supporting the American ideal that individuals can coexist peacefully and come together to form a community, regardless of background and differences.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1905, the Iran Threat Reduction Act.

I thank Chairwoman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member BERMAN for crafting this important, bipartisan bill. H.R. 1905 was reported out of the Foreign Affairs Committee by voice vote and comes to the floor with over 350 cosponsors—of which I am one.

We must make it clear to Iran that any pursuit of a nuclear weapons program is unacceptable. This bill is designed to significantly strengthen the hand of the Obama Administration in applying economic pressure on the Iranian regime.

Specifically, the bill targets Iran's petroleum sector by expanding the activities that could trigger sanctions to include making certain petroleum resource agreements with Iran. It also requires the President, subject to a national security waiver, to impose sanctions on entities doing business with the Central Bank of Iran if he determines the Central Bank is linked to the Iranian nuclear program. The measure also requires entities filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission to disclose business ties with Iran.

By most accounts, the sanctions passed by Congress last year have ratcheted up pressure on the Iranian government. But Iran continues to increase its stockpile of enriched uranium. This measure is necessary to give the President the tools to penalize the Iranian regime for its continual refusal to heed the objections of the international community.

I encourage my colleagues who have not already expressed support for H.R. 1905 to join me in support of the bill.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, 1995, when the last attempt at a balanced budget amendment passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 300–132, the national debt was $4,801,405,175,294.28.

Today, it is $15,060,274,082,298.88. We've added $10,258,868,907,004.60 dollars to our debt in 16 years. This is $10 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, in June 2010 President Obama signed into law the most far-reaching and carefully targeted sanctions ever imposed on Iran. Later that same month, the Administration also succeeded in bringing the United Nations Security Council to issue further, multilateral sanctions. In May, the United Nations issued a report demonstrating that these multilateral sanctions were having a serious, deleterious impact on Iran's ability to pursue nuclear weapons.

The reason these sanctions are having such an impact is that they have garnered the cooperation of allies around the world, who saw that this Administration was willing to engage Iran. If those allies now deem that we are turning back from that posture of engagement, and returning to the unilateralism of the Bush Administration, I am concerned that our effort to isolate the Iranian regime will collapse. It is the comprehensive diplomacy of the Obama Administration that has unified our European allies and brought them on board. That could end.

And in addition, the sanctions called for by H.R. 1905, are less targeted and more indiscriminate. They will have an impact, but that impact will not be directly related to our justified concern over human rights or Iran's nuclear military goals. Rather, they would hurt Iranians of all walks of life, including those we hope will become an effective opposition to

the current leadership. The recent IAEA report shows that Iran is not complying with its obligations under the treaty. We urgently need to keep a united front on the goal of preventing Iran from advancing its nuclear military capability. These sanctions could undermine that effort.

This bill is the wrong move for the global economy as well. In the middle of a very fragile economic recovery, these new sanctions could wreak havoc in the world oil market, right in the middle of winter, a time of our highest consumption. Already, we see oil prices rising. According to the Wall Street Journal, new sanctions could increase the price of oil by up to $1 per gallon. That would be terrible for U.S. consumers, businesses and the economy. But it would be very good for Iran's leaders.

In fact, the sanctions would do more to help Iran's Supreme Leader and President than hurt them. Last week, the fierce competition between President Ahmadinejad and Ayatollah Khamenei was threatening to boil over when an embezzlement scandal roiled the Iranian leadership. The Washington Post reported this week that President Ahmadinejad admitted that the country is having a hard team with sanctions, and that now is not the time to shake things up in the government. In other words, external pressure unified rival factions, and helped the repressive regime to achieve a united front.

These sanctions could also hurt Iranian Americans. Sanctions on Iran's Central Bank will make it hard for Iranian Americans to send money to relatives in Iran. That could mean that an Iranian living in the United States has no legal way of helping his parents or grandparents. It could force them to pursue unsafe and illegal channels to send legal remittances to family members. That would be a terrible injustice, and it would be bad for U.S. interests. The Iranian American community is our best way to reach out to people in Iran, and we should not be making it harder for them to do so.

The sanctions could also hurt innocent Iranians in other ways. Aside from making it harder to import food and medicine, this bill bans the licensing of sales of spare parts for civilian airliners. Iran's airlines are already among the most dangerous in the world because of the difficulty in maintaining them under sanctions. Over 1,000 people have died in air crashes in the last ten years.

Lastly, this bill is wrong because it would be an expression to the world that the United States is not interested in having a relationship with the people of Iran. As it stands now, we have very little understanding of what is really happening inside Iran. The Obama Administration has strengthened our capacity to know what is happening inside the country by adding to a network of diplomats in missions around the world focusing on developments in Iran.

But we have a long way to go. Recently Admiral Mike Mullen said that this absence of contact is hurting us. At a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace event shortly before he retired, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said: ''Even in the darkest days of the Cold War, we had links to the Soviet Union. We are not talking to Iran, so we don't understand each other.''

I agree with Admiral Mullen: we need more contact with Iran—about Afghanistan, the drug trade, and human rights—not less. Ambassador Tom Pickering, in a recent Newsweek essay, also criticized this bill because of the constitutional questions it raises about the separation of powers.

CISADA sanctions and U.N. measures are having a serious effect, and intensifying rifts in Iran's leadership. This bill would close those rifts as Iran's leaders circle their wagons, and would give them an excuse as to why things are bad on the economic front. I can't support it as it is written.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011—

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, due to a family medical issue, I was unable to cast the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

December 7, 2011—

Rollcall vote 892—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 893—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 894—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 895—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 896—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 897—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 898—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 899—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 900—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 901—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 902—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 903—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 904—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 905—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 906—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 907—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 908—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 909—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 910—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 911—I would have voted ''no''
Rollcall vote 912—I would have voted ''yes''

December 12, 2011—

Rollcall vote 913—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 914—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 915—I would have voted ''yes''
Rollcall vote 916—I would have voted ''no''

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1905, the Iran Threat Reduction Act of 2011. This bill promises to meet the threat the Islamic Republic of Iran poses and takes significant, tangible steps in limiting Iran's uranium enrichment and targeting Iran's nefarious activities.

The latest United Nations weapons inspectors' disclosure and International Atomic Energy Agency report on the Islamic Republic of Iran are consubstantial. The Iranian nuclear weapons program is in direct contravention to Iran's ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, endangers regional stability, and poses an unfathomable threat to international security. The Iranian Regime has defied international order and expectations in its undeniable pursuit of nuclear weapons and its close relationship with foreign terrorist organizations.

That is why the Iran Threat Reduction Act of 2011 is so important. These sanctions are right and just based on irrefutable evidence of malice on the international stage. We must declare that it is United States policy to deny, at every juncture, the ability for Iran to fund and pursue its nuclear program and its policy of inciting violence abroad. The Iranian regime's continuous circumvention of past sanctions and continued noncompliance require more aggressive actions.

The only way to ensure the Iranian regime cannot circumvent international will is to take definitive actions. The sanctions in the Iran Threat Reduction Act in conjunction with the language in the National Defense Authorization Act for 2012 to formally sanction the Central Bank of Iran, CBI, are the steps required at this moment to impede the progress of Iran's ambitions. By sanctioning the CBI and creating accountability to those that deal with Iran, we limit the Iranian leadership's ability to function and directly curtail the infrastructures that sustain Iran's illicit nuclear ambitions and its state-sponsorship of terrorist organizations.

I urge my colleagues to support the Iranian Threat Reduction Act of 2011 and stand with me against the threat posed by the Iranian nuclear program and Iran's known links to various terrorist organizations.

RECOGNIZING THE PARTNERSHIP OF RACHEL CARSON MIDDLE SCHOOL AND DOMINION POWER

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the partnership of Rachel Carson Middle School and Dominion Power in efforts to support green energy.

Through their partnership, Carson Middle School was able to recently install on its roof an array of 11 photovoltaic solar panels, which have already generated over 1,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity—enough to power a house for more than a month.

Rachel Carson Middle School is a Fairfax County public school with over 1200 students. The solar project was initiated in the spring of 2009 and driven by a group of former eighth grade students, its teacher sponsor, Mr. Kirk Treakle, and its Going Green Club, formerly established as Carson FREE—which stands for Future Renewable Energy Effort. The group was established in hopes that solar electric would be used in addition to several other prospective forms of renewable energy at school. The Going Green Club is researching wind, geothermal, solar thermal, and algae oil as future possibilities. The solar project was funded by grants from Dominion Power, the Earth Day Network, Lowe's, and InterfaceFLOR as well as donations from InScope International, Katydid Inc., the Carson PTA, and other individuals with no taxpayer money used.

The photovoltaic panels are ''grid-tied'' so the electricity they produce helps power the

school and decreases the amount of electricity that must be generated by other means, reducing pollution. While serving as a clean energy resource, the photovoltaic system is also used as an accessible, educational resource with students participating in an energy workshop using the new photovoltaic installation and online data logger. The system's connections to the science curriculum in areas of energy, electricity, and the environment serve as great additions to the school.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the partnership of Rachel Carson Middle School and Dominion Power. Together, they have succeeded in taking a great step towards cleaner energy for the future. I extend my congratulations to the school and thank Rachel Carson Middle School and Dominion Power for their valuable efforts.

EASTERN WASHINGTON HONORS RETIRING WASHINGTON FARM BUREAU PRESIDENT STEVE APPEL

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the extraordinary career of one of Eastern Washington's most exemplary leaders, Mr. Steve Appel. After devoting over 37 years of service to the Farm Bureau—the last 17 of which have been as Washington Farm Bureau's esteemed President—Steve has decided to retire. His career comes to an end with a long list of distinguished accomplishments and a record of success for the state of Washington.

As a third-generation family farmer, Steve grew wheat and barley in southeast Washington state and worked for decades to promote U.S. agriculture interests at home and abroad. A Washington State University alumnus, Steve leaves behind a distinguished career in Washington's agriculture community.

Steve was elected as Washington Farm Bureau president in 1994 and represents the longest-serving state President in the organization's history. His vision for the organization's growth was tremendous. In fact, in just the last five years, the Bureau experienced an 85 percent increase in membership alone. Under his leadership, Washington Farm Bureau pioneered the first-ever association health plan and industrial insurance safety and health program, which provide health insurance to rural Washingtonians in areas where such services were previously unavailable.

In addition to serving as the Bureau's President, Steve served as Vice President of the American Farm Bureau Federation—the world's largest general agriculture organization with over six million members—from 2001 through 2007. As the Pacific Northwest's first farmer to serve as an officer in the AFBF, he directed and implemented the organization's grassroots development process. Steve has also served on the Whitman County Planning Commission, Whitman County Soil Conservation Board, and the Eastern Washington Advisory Committee for the Washington Policy Center.

But his leadership extends far beyond his elected and appointed positions. He has testified on many congressional committees and remains extremely engaged in domestic and international trade issues. In his capacity as chairman of AFBF's trade advisory committee, Steve partook in a trade mission to Cuba and Mexico to advocate for advanced trade opportunities between the United States and Latin America.

While Steve is retiring as President of the Washington Farm Bureau, he will continue to serve as a vocal leader and member of the WFB Health Care Trust Board of Directors and the Board of Directors for Farm Bureau Bank. He leaves behind an indelible legacy in the agriculture community and will continue to play an instrumental role in the years to come.

Steve has been more than just a leader for the Farm Bureau; he's been a model for the state of Washington. When asked how he managed his success, he often says, "I live by something my dad said a lot: 'You do the best job you know how to do and leave the rest to the man upstairs.'" I congratulate Steve on his remarkable leadership and thank him for the profound differences he made—and will continue to make—in the state of Washington.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, let's start with what we know:

First, Iran is actively seeking nuclear weapons, and the international community has ratcheted up sanctions to prevent Tehran from getting the bomb.

Second, Iran is attempting to circumvent these sanctions, with Iranian nationals establishing front companies in other countries to get around U.N. restrictions.

Just this year, a grand jury indicted a firm established by Iranians but operating in Istanbul for allegedly procuring materials for Iran's ballistic missile program.

Third, we must be vigilant about companies that deliberately hide their ties to Iran.

But what about companies that don't even try to conceal their Iranian connections?

In October, this Congress passed H.R. 1904, the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act. This bill will allow Rio Tinto, a foreign company that does business with Iran, to obtain public land in Arizona so that it can mine for copper here in the United States.

But when Republicans in this chamber had a chance to join Democrats to ensure these business ties between Rio Tinto and Iran were severed as a condition of doing business on our land, every single member of the Republican majority voted no.

With the threat of nuclear weapons landing in the hands of Ahmadinejad, the stakes are simply too high to change the rules when the majority sees fit.

Vote yes on H.R. 1905 today, and we must insist on strong nuclear nonproliferation conditions in H.R. 1904.

DAVID MARVIN BLUMBERG'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker I rise today to honor the celebration of David Marvin Blumberg's 60th birthday.

David was born on December 26, 1951 in Jacksonville, Florida. He is the fourth of five children born to Marvin Bernard and Mary Louise Blumberg. David obtained his Masters Degree of Public Administration in 1994 from the University of North Florida.

He was honorably discharged from his service in the USAF in 1974 after having worked as an instrument mechanic on the Minute Man 1, 2, & 3 missiles at Vandenberg AFB, CA.

David worked alongside his father at Marvin Blumberg and Sons from 1974–1982. He was certified as an FAA Air Traffic controller and worked in that capacity from 1982–2006.

Presently he is serving as an Air Traffic Safety Risk Management Facilitator and Instructor nationwide.

David is the proud father of Lauren, Will, Olivia, Nathan and Natalie. He has one grandchild, Walker Brooks Haas.

David plays the drums in a band comprised of other Air Traffic Controllers who raise money for charities and to date they have raised over $650,000 for local and national charities.

David will be moving to Fort Worth, Texas to supplement the Federal Aviation Administration's Safety Risk Management staff.

His band Aire Traffic will be playing future benefit concerts to raise money for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and for the Joseph Sam's School for Special Needs Children in Fayetteville, GA.

Please join me in wishing David Blumberg a very happy 60th birthday.

PIPELINE SAFETY, REGULATORY CERTAINTY, AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 12, 2011

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker. I support the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act. This bill has been improved since it was marked up by the Energy and Commerce and Transportation and Infrastructure Committees. I know that there are residual issues that some in the industry and some in the environmental community still have. No legislation will make everyone happy all the time, but I think my colleagues Representatives UPTON and DINGELL, have worked hard to come as close as possible with the legislation before us today. I thank them for their leadership and I am pleased that they have set an example of bipartisan legislating that we should all follow.

Pipeline safety is one that is particularly important to me. I represent parts of Houston and East Harris County, where virtually everyone either lives on, or in close proximity to, a

natural gas or oil pipeline. I also have thousands of constituents who rely on this industry for employment and their livelihood. I understand the need to pass a bill that addresses the dual priorities of ensuring safety along these pipelines and providing regulatory certainty for the operators in the years ahead.

There are problems with the bill, for instance, this bill may lead to an attempt by this Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, PHMSA, or future PHMSAs to regulate offshore gathering lines in the same way that onshore lines are regulated. While not prescribed by this legislation, the door is left open. It is important that PHMSA carefully consider how to regulate these lines and not take a one-size fits all approach. There are other tweaks that would have been nice, but this is a good bill and represents a bipartisan compromise.

Failure to pass a bill, or one side or another pursuing a partisan agenda over good policy, would have been far worse than the small problems I have with this bill. I commend Representatives UPTON and DINGELL for this bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

RECOGNIZING ARIANNA McQUILLEN, RECIPIENT OF A BUICK AND GENERAL MOTORS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Arianna McQuillen, of Fairfax Station, on her selection as a Buick and General Motors Foundation Scholarship Recipient. She has been identified as one of 100 outstanding students from across the United States to receive up to $25,000 in a renewable scholarship. She plans to attend Massachusetts Institute of Technology and specialize in robotics.

Arianna is very involved in our community, working on projects such as cleaning the Occoquan watershed, planting trees, preparing care packages for soldiers abroad and tutoring young students.

Her academic record is proof that she is a high-achieving student. She studied at Lake Braddock Secondary School, where her interests varied from math and science to art and the environment. She has won many awards in areas ranging from debate to art. She is a National Merit Scholar, a 2010 Beat the Odds Scholarship Recipient, an Advanced Placement Scholar, and a National Achievement Semi-Finalist.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Arianna McQuillen's remarkable achievements and wishing her continued success as she pursues her degree at MIT.

HONORING SLOVAK EXPLOSIVE ORDINANCE DISPOSAL (EOD) MAJOR BARTAKOVICS AND EOD TEAM

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Slovak Explosive Ordinance Disposal, EOD, Maj. Roland Bartakovics and the entire Slovak EOD team for their role in resisting an assault by armed insurgents on Camp Nathan Smith in Kandahar. I would like to recognize the Slovaks for their bravery during a failed enemy attack on the base.

The camp in Kandahar, which houses the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team, KPRT, was attacked by four armed insurgents with rocket-propelled grenades and small fire arms. The attack lasted nearly 11 hours, and was ended by the Afghan National Police supported by coalition forces, including the Slovak EOD team. Thanks to the determined professionalism of the Slovak unit, at no point did the attackers gain access to the compound.

I would like to offer my condolences to the families and loved ones of those killed and injured during the attack. The heroic leadership of the entire Slovak unit will forever be remembered. Their service and dedication has brought great pride to their nation, families and communities.

Echoed throughout Afghanistan, the KPRT reflects a productive civilian-military partnership. The United States stands with the Afghan people and their government in pursuing the mutual goal of a stable and prosperous Afghanistan. The United States owes a great debt of gratitude to Maj. Roland Bartakovics and the entire Slovak EOD team for putting themselves in harm's way in the pursuit of freedom.

MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID B. McKINLEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. McKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I voted to protect the Social Security Trust Fund by opposing H.R. 3630 and would like to take this opportunity to discuss my decision. This bill was a patchwork of many policies that were thrown together at the last hour and created a flawed piece of legislation that I could not support.

Primarily, the corner stone of this legislation—the extension of the payroll tax reduction—did not create jobs for the last year it has been in effect. Over the past five months, I have been vocal in my opposition to the President's unproductive plan. Since, I do support a long-term "doc fix" to ensure that doctors continue to accept Medicare patients, I do not support the $17 billion cut from hospital payments, including those that are essential to help hospitals care for low-income Medicare patients. I do support the Keystone XL pipeline and efforts to reform unemployment insurance; however, these were not the central issues of the legislation we considered yesterday.

Over the last several days, I have conducted numerous town hall-like meetings to discuss this legislation with constituents. As a result of these conversations with everyday West Virginians, it was apparent to me that breaking from both President Obama and even my own party on this bill was the right thing to do.

Washington just doesn't get it. This tax cut has been in effect for the last year and it clearly did not improve the economy. And at what cost? For the second year in a row, this bill would take another $180 billion from Social Security with a promise to be paid back over the years, all to give the average West Virginia worker an extra $30 in his or her paycheck every two weeks. That's not a jobs plan—it's a re-election plan. We have seen these same unsuccessful economic plans for the past three years, and for those three years they have failed miserably. Does it make sense to continue to make choices that we know from experience do not work?

I will concede that after spending most of this past year above 9 percent, unemployment has dropped to 8.6 percent. But the primary driver of this change is simply that 315,000 Americans simply stopped looking for work. Also, at this time of year, the retail industry increases their staff by almost 50 percent; those people will be back on unemployment benefits in February. Nobody can say that the payroll tax "holiday" has had a meaningful impact on the unemployment rate thus far, nor will it likely prove beneficial if extended for another year.

We've all been told that Social Security's finances are in trouble, yet President Obama's plan makes the situation worse. We cannot continue to send mixed messages to senior citizens and current workers. They need to be able to trust that Social Security will be there for them. If we do not stop extending this payroll tax cut, then Social Security will cease to be a guarantee and instead become another typical government program reliant entirely on politicians' whims.

That's not fair for our seniors or current workers who are currently paying into Social Security. So the question becomes, if not now, when we will stop raiding Social Security?

H.R. 3630 is just another temporary tax reduction that only produces more uncertainty for employers and fails to protect our seniors. Real structural reforms are needed to stabilize Social Security. Past experience shows that Congress will spend the next 10 years figuring out how to spend the money designated as offsets for today's bill on other projects. It won't be used to pay for the bill; I could not in good faith support a measure that will raid the trust fund without comprehensive reform to the system.

As Andrew Biggs, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, said, "People don't generally respond well to temporary tax cuts so it's unlikely you're going to see a strong economic response." House Budget Committee Chairman PAUL RYAN has likened the payroll tax cut to "sugar-high economics." And Chris Edwards, a tax scholar at the Cato Institute, said that the president's plan "is based on faulty Keynesian theories and misplaced confidence in the government's ability to micromanage short-run growth." Perpetuating the president's failed economic policies,

especially if we have to rob Social Security to do it, has to stop.

Additionally, the reductions in federal reimbursements to hospitals that are contained in this legislation are not acceptable. Hospitals in northern West Virginia are already being paid at some of the lowest Medicare rates in the country; we should not be making it even harder for the hospitals to provide quality healthcare to our seniors.

Again, since this bill was loaded up at the last minute with several items which I have already strongly supported throughout this Congress—including jumpstarting the Keystone Pipeline, relaxing EPA regulations on boilers, extending and reforming unemployment benefits and other government programs, and preventing a scheduled 27% cut to doctors' Medicare reimbursement rates—it is simply unacceptable to continue the president's misguided economic theories at seniors' expense.

This bill has a long way to go despite the short timeframe in which Congress is operating, and if significant changes are made, it may be worth another look. But I came to Washington to get something done, create jobs, and restore common sense to the process. Unfortunately this particular bill fails that test.

RECOGNIZING THE YOEMEN MARCHING BAND OF CAMERON HIGH SCHOOL IN CAMERON, TEXAS

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Yoemen Marching Band of Cameron High School who placed third out of the 297 bands in state 2A marching competition in San Antonio on November 7, 2011.

The 97 member band is under the direction of Stephen Moss, head director, and Craig George and Danielle Roberts, assistant directors. Only ten bands performed in the finals competition, and the Yoemen Marching Band received a 1st place vote from all five judges, which advanced them to the UIL State Marching Contest in San Antonio for the first time in the history of the school. The band competed in the preliminary competition at the UIL State Marching Contest, which advanced them to the finals portion of the competition. The Yomemen Marching Band came in 2nd place behind the two time champion Queen City.

This 2nd place finish advanced the band to the highly coveted finals competition that same evening. The Yoeman High School Marching Band was also selected to play at the World War II Memorial in Washington DC and was one of the ten bands selected to play in the Houston Livetock Show and Rodeo Parade this past spring.

I congratulate the Cameron High School Yoemen Marching Band on their accomplishments and I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress.

RECOGNIZING THE SEMI-FINALISTS FOR THE ASIAN AMERICAN SUCCESS YOUTHCON SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to rise today to recognize the finalists of the 2011 Asian American Success (AASuccess) YouthCon Scholarship program. Each year, AASuccess grants scholarships and recognition awards to 6 students in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area.

Founded in April 2006 by Dave Nguyen, Irina Nguyen, David Montanari, Sumesh Kaushal and Malou Gemeniano, the missions of AASuccess are to promote academic excellence of young Asian American and other minority students, foster mentorship and partnership between career professionals and student members, and promote "The Act of Giving Back" in the Asian American community. AASuccess offers 4 different programs to achieve their goals; the AAS Life Skills Academy, Scholarship Program, Giving Back Program, and the Arc360 Web TV Program.

Scholarships are awarded in amounts ranging from $500.00 to $1000.00, and winners are selected based on academic performance, civic engagement, and completion of an essay. Using famous images from Saigon for inspiration, the theme for this year's essay asked applicants to consider their freedom, and the connection between protection of personal freedoms and civic duties. This thought provoking topic has encouraged students to reflect on and consider some of the most crucial questions we face today.

While there will be 6 scholarship winners, it is my great pleasure to recognize the following 12 finalists:

Ms. Sungmin Sohn; Mr. Vihanh Tham; Ms. Khanh-Ni Thi Nguyen; Ms. Mai Ly; Ms. Julie Hoang; Mr. Dylan Vu; Mr. Tristin Tran; Mr. Maxwell Tran; Mr. Minh Pham; Ms. Kirby Taylor; Ms. Julia Ngoc-Kim Nguyen; Ms. Krystal Sing.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the efforts of these students, and in congratulating them on their academic and civic accomplishments. I also commend AASuccess for their efforts to ensure and encourage professional development and success of students in our community.

MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, during this Season of Giving, when our nation should be reflecting on the need of friends and neighbors who are out of work and struggling to provide for their loved ones, this chamber will vote today to cut unemployment benefits for one million of our fellow Americans.

The House Majority's bill, H.R. 3630, would eliminate several tiers of benefits, created under the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program, which has provided up to 99 weeks of support for those who lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

If this legislation becomes law, the maximum potential unemployment benefit will fall to 59 weeks.

This legislation would also allow states, many of which are struggling to balance their budgets, to reduce the average weekly amount available to beneficiaries.

I am strongly opposed to any reduction in emergency unemployment insurance.

This Congress cannot and must not adjourn for the holidays and go home to tell our unemployed neighbors that the richest country on earth cannot find a place in their heart to help them in their time of need.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I am not able to support H.R. 3630 even though I am a strong supporter of moving the Keystone XL Project along and would support the language included in this bill if considered separately.

The Keystone XL project makes both energy and economic sense for our country, and I hope that the Administration could find a way to allow for construction to commence in some of the states while simultaneously revisiting the route in Nebraska.

I urge my colleagues to stand in support of the millions of our fellow Americans struggling to find work and to oppose this legislation.

HOUSE DEMOCRACY PARTNERSHIP

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected to this body in 1980, the preeminent national security threat that gravely concerned us all was the Soviet Union. A decade later, as we know very well, the Soviet Union collapsed and the Cold War came to an end. As we quickly near the twentieth anniversary of that transformative event, we should not forget the role that the United States Congress played in supporting democratic development in the legislatures of many of the former Warsaw Pact and Soviet republics. The Frost-Solomon Task Force partnered with the newly democratically elected members of post-Soviet legislatures to offer support and guidance in building an independent, co-equal legislative branch of government. A key part of that effort was the role our Congressional Research Service played in building strong, independent, nonpartisan research and analysis capabilities for these nascent institutions. Many of these countries are now members of NATO, the European Union, and in some cases, the Eurozone. They are fully integrated into the Trans-Atlantic partnership.

However, the work of democratic development in the region is not over. I have the privilege of leading, along with my friend and colleague Rep. DAVID PRICE, the House Democracy Partnership (HDP). Our commission is committed to helping strengthen legislatures in new and re-emerging democracies by engaging with our counterparts throughout the world. Two of our partner countries are Ukraine and the Republic of Georgia. Both are former Soviet republics working to consolidate their democracies. To date, their efforts have been

met with varying levels of success, but HDP has been honored to work with reformers in both countries as they strive to throw off the shackles of their authoritarian past.

The world has watched over the past week as Russia's citizens have stood up and demanded greater political freedom and transparency, which is indeed a hopeful step. However, there is another country in Eastern Europe that has resisted all efforts to transform itself into a modern democracy and maintains itself as an authoritarian dictatorship. The country of Belarus remains Europe's only dictatorship. Under the unyielding grip of dictator Alexsandr Lukashenko, the people of Belarus are denied the basic freedoms of assembly, association, and expression. The press is heavily restricted and intimidated. The internet is censored. Independent nongovernmental organizations are not allowed to operate. There is little freedom of religion. And 100,000 Belarusians have been barred from leaving the country. For the people of Belarus, the oppression of the past did not dissolve with the Soviet Union, but remains a bitter reality.

While their neighbors in Central and Eastern Europe are able to freely elect their own leaders, Belarusians have witnessed one stage-managed election after another under the current regime. Lukashenko has held illegal referenda to change the constitution, eliminate term limits, and dissolve an elected parliament. In December 2010, the Government of Belarus conducted a presidential election that failed to meet basic standards of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and followed that election by detaining and beating more than 600 peaceful opposition protestors. Seven of nine opposition presidential candidates were jailed and what remains of the independent media was attacked. Rather than address the OSCE's criticisms, the OSCE was kicked out of the country by the government.

To highlight the continued abuses of the Lukashenko regime and once again demonstrate Congressional support for the aspirations of the Belarusian people, the House voted to renew the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004, with a unanimous vote on July 6 of this year. This bill not only imposes additional sanctions on the leaders of the corrupt Belarusian regime, but allows the United States to work with groups who are promoting freedom and democracy, particularly media groups such as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Voice of America, European Radio for Belarus, and Belsat.

The U.S. Congress will continue to stand with the Belarusian people as they fight for self determination and the rule of law. I look forward to the day that they are able to join their European neighbors on the right side of history with a lasting, peaceful and prosperous democracy.

MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the language included in this bill that would remove current barriers for states to strengthen the unemployment program through optional drug testing. The purpose of the unemployment insurance program is to be a safety net, a bridge to reemployment. However, when beneficiaries choose to abuse illegal drugs they are no longer at their competitive best within the jobs market.

That is why I have proposed legislation, H.R. 3601 the "Ensuring Quality in the Unemployment Insurance Program (EQUIP) Act," that would require screenings for applicants of unemployment insurance. Applicants would be screened using a non-invasive questionnaire that has a 94 percent accuracy rate. If identified as likely to use drugs, an applicant for unemployment would be required to pass a drug test as a condition of benefits. This non-invasive practice has been upheld by state courts in New Jersey, Texas and Indiana. A federal court in West Virginia upheld that state's practice of screening applicants for Social Security Disability Insurance.

The screening would not increase federal spending. The estimated cost is $12 per person. This would be more than offset by reducing the $7.5 billion budget for the controversial Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) and Consumers Operated and Oriented Plan (CO–OPs), which was established to ration health care expenditures.

At one of the several listening sessions I had with business owners earlier this year, I had an employer tell me of an overwhelming response for job openings. There was just one problem: half the people who applied could not even pass a drug test. Another told me about an employee they had to temporarily lay off when times were tight. A month later when he contacted his former employee to offer him a new position, he declined because unemployment was paying the bills. With our budget woes of more than $15 trillion in debt, how can we justify using unemployment insurance to pay someone not to work when they have voluntarily taken themselves out of the hiring pool? That is what we are doing when someone on unemployment is using drugs.

Under the current system, workers can earn up to 26 weeks through employer contribution but are eligible for 99 weeks of benefits under current law. Your tax dollars make up the difference. Maximizing efficiency and effectiveness of programs like unemployment insurance has to be our society's goal.

Drug screening beneficiaries incentivizes individuals to not abuse drugs, which would otherwise render them unfit to be employed. Some have said this proposal asks too much of those who have lost their jobs, but asking someone who is unemployed to do his or her part by staying eligible to work is common sense, not draconian.

I look forward to working with the Committee on this proposal and a hearing in the spring.

URGING TURKEY TO SAFEGUARD ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

SPEECH OF

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the text of House Resolution 306 could lead to false conclusions about Turkey. Make no mistake: Turkey has taken concrete steps to improve religious freedom through a series of meaningful initiatives. Moreover, Turkey is a secular, modernized NATO ally that provides indispensible military and diplomatic support to the United States and our allies. Its efforts with respect to religious inclusion are welcome and worthy of recognition.

In September, for example, Secretary Clinton praised Turkey's continued progress in enhancing religious freedom, stating:

> We have also seen Turkey take serious steps to improve the climate for religious tolerance. The Turkish government issued a decree in August that invited non-Muslims to reclaim churches and synagogues that were confiscated 75 years ago. I applaud Prime Minister Erdogan's very important commitment to doing so.

Long before H. Res. 306 was introduced, the Turkish Government was enhancing religious freedom. For example:

In May 2010, the Prime Ministry issued a circular underlining that Turkey's non-Muslim citizens share with all other Turkish citizens the right to enjoy and maintain their own identities and cultures in parallel with the national identity and culture of Turkey.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul recently has been permitted to conduct masses at religiously significant venues that had been rendered museums due to disuse.

In November 2010, Turkish authorities returned a former orphanage to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate following a decision by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The attorney representing the Patriarchate declared, "This marks a first in Europe. Turkey became the first country to implement a decision of the ECHR by returning the property. This should be an example for other countries."

Since the original text of H. Res. 306 was introduced, Turkey amended its Law on Foundations to state that immovable properties, cemeteries, and fountains (of the non-Muslim community foundations registered in the name of Turkish public institutions) will be returned to the relevant non-Muslim community foundations, upon those non-Muslim foundations' request.

On a larger scale, Turkey has been an indispensible ally and friend of the United States since it joined NATO almost 60 years ago (in 1952). Given Turkey's strategic location and maintenance of the second largest military in NATO, this should come as no surprise. Currently, NATO is installing radar systems in Turkey and Romania as part of the regional anti-ballistic missile defense system. Moreover, when NATO passed Resolution 1973, which enforced a no-fly zone in Libya, Turkey helped lead a NATO-led coalition, after playing a major role in deliberations with the United States and other key allies. Turkey also had a key role in negotiating the release of four New York Times reporters who were captured during fighting in Libya.

With regard to U.S. operations in Afghanistan, Turkey:

Has made available its Konya Air Base and other airports for the deployment of aircraft and allies' cargo aircraft in support of ISAF operations.

Has deployed five Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) and has also conducted in-place training of 8,000 Afghan National Army (ANA) members and training in Turkey for an additional 1,000 Afghan troops.

Turkey established two civilian-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Wardak and Jawzjan, and opened a branch of the Turkish International Cooperation Agency in Kabul, from which it runs a number of humanitarian assistance and economic development projects.

Turkey stations over 1,700 U.S. military personnel under the U.S.-Turkey Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement. Incirlik Air Base, which houses about 1,500 U.S. military personnel, is a transit point for 68% of air logistical support for Iraq and Afghanistan. Each year, an average of 2,000 American C–17 aircraft and an average of 1,460 KC–135 refueling tankers fly through the Turkish air base. Turkey's support is not limited to access of its air bases; its Mersin port on the Mediterranean is part of the U.S.'s supply network to Afghanistan.

In a time when several Muslim majority countries are undergoing upheaval, Turkey provides an ideal model to its neighbors. It is a secular, modern, Muslim majority state that is a significant NATO ally. In its domestic affairs, Turkey is again a model for its neighbors. According to the State Department's 13th Annual Report on Religious Freedom,

> During the reporting period, the [Turkish] government took steps to improve religious freedom. Notably the government permitted religious services to be held annually in historic Christian sites that had been turned into state museums after decades of disuse.

As a friend of Turkey, the United States ought to continue to recognize Turkey's initiatives on religious freedom and encourage Turkey to continue its progress. This is what allies do.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAMPA BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 20th Anniversary of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, which has been a key factor in restoring and improving the ecological health of Tampa Bay. Designated by Congress as an 'estuary of national significance' under the National Estuary Program in 1990, the Tampa Bay Estuary program is one of only 28 programs in the United States and four in Florida.

Unique environments that are found where rivers meet the sea, estuaries are vital components to the world's ecosystem. Estuaries improve water quality by filtering pollutants, act as buffers to protect shorelines from erosion and flooding, serve as nursery grounds for the majority of commercial and recreational fish and shellfish consumed by Americans, and provide essential food and habitat for birds, fish and other wildlife.

Created by Congress in 1987, the National Estuary Program works to identify and restore nationally significant estuaries that are threatened by pollution. Through an amendment to an appropriations bill, we worked quickly to ensure that Tampa Bay was included as one of the first estuary programs, recognizing its importance to the ecosystem of Florida and Pinellas County. Since then, the Tampa Bay Estuary Program has operated as a partnership of thousands of volunteers, elected officials, resource managers and commercial and recreational resource users who work together to restore and improve the ecological health of Tampa Bay.

The program has made significant progress in improving Tampa Bay during the last two decades. Important achievements over the years include the recovery of more than 6,000 acres of life-sustaining sea grasses, the restoration of more than 5,000 acres of coastal habitats, and improved water quality and clarity to levels not seen since the 1950s. The Tampa Bay National Estuary Program has done a tremendous job in cleaning, preserving and maintaining the health and vitality of Tampa Bay and today this estuary is not only a precious natural habitat for many species of fish, birds and flora, but also a beautiful playground for swimmers, boaters and general admirers.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor to have been a partner in this incredible successful partnership that has made an invaluable contribution to restoring this unique Florida ecosystem. The hard work and dedication of the staff and their community partners ensures that the Tampa Bay Estuary Program will continue to build upon their success in the future. Please join me in congratulating all those who have been a part of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program for a job well done over these past 20 years.

CONGRATULATING NATIONAL GUARD ON 375TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. BASS of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartfelt congratulations to the National Guard in honor of its 375th anniversary and a particular thank you to the men and women that serve in the New Hampshire National Guard. The origins of the New Hampshire National Guard can be traced back to 1623 with a proud tradition of protecting the lives and property of Granite State residents. New Hampshire Guardsmen have always answered the call to serve our great state and nation and since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, more than 2,000 New Hampshire Guardsmen have served overseas as part of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and New Dawn. Collectively, the New Hampshire Guardsmen have received the highest honors our military bestows including the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Army Commendation Medals, Combat Infantry and Combat Action Badges and Purple Hearts.

New Hampshire's citizen soldiers and airmen have served domestically as well by mobilizing under Operation Noble Eagle, aiding the victims of severe weather, and rescuing lost hikers in the White Mountains. I am proud to represent the brave men and women of New Hampshire's National Guard and look forward to honoring them for their service in the years to come.

IRAN, NORTH KOREA, AND SYRIA NONPROLIFERATION REFORM AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, North Korea has nuclear weapons. Iran is developing nuclear weapons. Al-Qaeda wants to acquire nuclear weapons. The threat we face is very, very real.

Sanctions are important to help prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, but they are not enough. America must lead by example.

The U.S. recently signed the New START treaty, requiring reductions to our nuclear arsenal. Yet, we still plan to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on new nuclear weapons and related programs over the next decade.

Why do we allow this wasteful spending to continue? Because some Republicans in this Chamber treat the nuclear weapons budget as a sacred cow, never to be questioned or scrutinized. This is ridiculous.

Wasteful nuclear weapons spending actually harms national security. It sends the message to Iran, North Korea, and Syria that while we don't want you to have these weapons, we are not willing to make cuts ourselves. This is the wrong message to send.

You cannot argue temperance from a barstool.

The central deal in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty was that the non-weapons states agreed to forgo the right to get the bomb. The weapons states in return, agreed to negotiate measures leading to disarmament.

That should be our goal, and we can take an important step in this direction by reducing unnecessary nuclear weapons spending.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this statement is submitted as an extension of my remarks on the House floor, December 13, 2011, discussing H.R. 1905, the Iran Threat Reduction Act of 2011:

I thank my friend from California, the Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, for discussing Section 601(c) of the Iran Threat Reduction Act of 2011 with me.

Despite his helpful words, I still have strong reservations about language used in this legislation.

Specifically with the language in Section 601(c) of this bill, which states that:

> ''No person employed with the United States Government may contact in an official or unofficial capacity any person that is an agent, instrumentality, or official of, is affiliated with, or is serving as a representative of the Government of Iran; and presents a threat to the United States or is affiliated with terrorist organizations.''

As most of my colleagues would agree, the whole of the Iranian government is itself a "threat" to the United States. Further, Iran actively supports terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah, both listed as Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the State Department. It would be strange logic indeed to disassociate any of the officials who work for Iran from a "threat" to the U.S. It would appear impossible to comply with this language.

Given the inability to comply with this language, this leaves the waiver provision by the President as the only means to initiating contact with Iran. Diplomacy tied to a 15-day countdown is ineffective at best and extremely dangerous at worst. Luckily, this restriction on the Executive Power to conduct the country's foreign policy is likely unconstitutional. This waiver is, on its face, questionable, unnecessarily ties the hands of our President, and is poor policy.

Congress would be better served in these challenging times to do its own job, rather than making it harder for the President to do his.

CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION ON CHINA HEARING ON ''CHINA'S CENSORSHIP OF THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA: THE HUMAN TOLL AND TRADE IMPACT''

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, I would ask that the following opening statements be submitted to the RECORD for the November 17, 2001 hearing on "China's Censorship of the Internet and Social Media: The Human Toll and Trade Impact."

CHINA'S CENSORSHIP OF THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA: THE HUMAN TOLL AND TRADE IMPACT

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER SMITH, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NEW JERSEY, CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

The Commission will come to order. I want to welcome all of our distinguished witnesses to this very important hearing. We really appreciate the attendance of all of our panelists and guests. It's a pleasure to welcome everyone to this important roundtable on ''China's Censorship of the Internet and Social Media: The Human Toll and Trade Impact.'' As recent events have shown, the issue of Internet censorship has only grown in terms of importance and magnitude, and I thank the Congressional-Executive Commission on China staff for organizing a hearing on this pressing issue, and for the tremendous scholarly work they have done not only in presenting our annual report, which is filled with facts and information that is actionable, but for the ongoing work that they do to monitor the gross abuses of human rights in China.

As the Congressional-Executive Commission on China's 2011 annual human rights report demonstrates, China's leadership has grown more assertive in its violation of rights, disregarding the very laws and international standards that they claim to uphold, while tightening their grip on Chinese society. As Chinese citizens have increasingly called for freedoms and reforms, China has only strengthened its controls over many areas of society—particularly over the Internet.

While China has witnessed a boom in the popularity of social media and Internet sites, Chinese citizens that access online sites today remain under the watchful eye of the State. By some accounts, China has imprisoned more Internet activists than any other country in the world, and its Internet environment ranks among the most restrictive globally. Chinese citizens are unable to voice a range of criticism that Americans undoubtedly take for granted each day: Chinese citizens that tweet about local corruption may face the threat of abuse or harassment. Citizens that express dissatisfaction over tainted food supplies that injure children—the most vulnerable population of our society—may come to hear a knock at the door. And, citizens that voice the human desire for democracy and rights protections we value so dearly may disappear into the official custody of the State, where they face torture and incarceration.

For Chinese citizens, the line that can't be crossed is unclear. While mentions of the 1989 Tiananmen protests are surely prohibited, China's censorship remains at the whimsy of governmental agencies that seek to limit what they perceive to be any destabilizing commentary. In China, the Internet provides no transparency—and citizens must weigh their choices each time they click to send an email or press a button or post personal views online. Who can forget Shi Tao, who for merely posting information about what he is not allowed to do, with regards to Tiananmen Square, garnered a ten year prison sentence when Yahoo opened up their personally identifiable information and gave it to the Chinese secret police that lead to his conviction. There are no lists of banned words. There are no registers of prohibited topics. In China, there is no transparency. There are only consequences, and dire ones at that.

Today, we welcome two panels that will address China's Internet censorship from two perspectives. The witnesses will not only provide personal accounts of how China's censorship affects individuals and families, but also detail how China's actions hinder the rights of U.S. businesses that seek to compete fairly in China. These panels will expose China's bold disregard for its own laws and its international obligations, specifically in terms of its controls on internet activity and expression.

In the first panel today, we will hear personal accounts of the consequences Chinese citizens face in seeking to express their fundamental rights of expression. We will hear from a son and a pastor that have seen firsthand the anxious and unforgiving hand of China's Internet police. We will hear how the simplest calls for freedom and reforms can lead to the separation of loved ones and partition of families.

In the second panel, we will hear how China's Internet restrictions and controls not only hurt its citizens, but also hurt countries seeking to better China through international trade and cooperation. On a commercial level, China similarly lacks the kind of transparency and fairness that we expect in global trading partners. China has not only failed to comply with its WTO commitments, it has exploited our expectations to create an unlevel playing field, hurting the competitiveness of U.S. businesses and workers alike.

We recognize that the Internet and social media can and should be used to provide people with greater access to honest information and to open up commercial opportunities for businesses operating in global markets. We know that the promise of information technology can not be achieved when it is used by repressive governments to find, capture, convict and so often torture ordinary citizens for voicing concerns publicly. Information technology can not be advanced when it involves the systemic exclusion of commercial competitors and rampant disregard for transparency and intellectual property.

China is one of the most repressive and restrictive countries when it comes to the control of the Internet and the impact goes far beyond the commercial losses for U.S. companies that want to participate in that market. There are serious human rights implications and we have seen the damage inflicted countless times through the arrest of bloggers and prodemocracy activists who have used the Internet to communicate with colleagues or disseminate views and then have been arrested. What makes this situation even worse is that sometimes it is U.S. companies, and my colleagues will recall I held the first of a series of hearings where we had Microsoft, Yahoo, Cisco, and Google before our committee—it was my subcommittee on human rights—held up their hands and promised to tell the whole truth and nothing but, and then said they couldn't tell us what they were censoring and would not tell us how they were being complicit. Harry Wu, who is here, and has been a leader on this issue, pointed out that Cisco has so enabled the secret police to track down people using police net, and that the use of cyber police, ubiquitous throughout all of China, in order to capture the best, bravest, and smartest in China, who will bring that country to democracy if only allowed to do so.

NOVEMBER 17, 2011 TESTIMONY BEFORE THE CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA HEARING ON ''CHINA'S CENSORSHIP OF THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA: THE HUMAN TOLL AND TRADE IMPACT''

GILBERT B. KAPLAN, PARTNER, KING & SPALDING, PRESIDENT, COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT U.S. TRADE LAWS—INTRODUCTION

China's censorship of the Internet and its restrictions on the free flow of information have a very significant impact on U.S. economic and trade interests. China continues to impose debilitating burdens on foreign Internet service providers through its censorship regime, its blocking of foreign websites, and its ''Great Firewall'' infrastructure, which inhibit or prevent all together U.S. companies' ability to do business in China, and their ability to compete with Chinese domestic companies. China's Internet service providers have capitalized on this discriminatory treatment of U.S. companies and have consequently experienced great success. Earlier this year, for example, RenRen (known as ''China's Facebook'') filed for a U.S. public offering, symbolizing its success to date and its plans for expansion. Meanwhile, Facebook is blocked in China. These measures have been ongoing for years, and have had an overwhelming adverse impact on market share for U.S. companies perhaps to the extent that such market share can never be recovered.

China's blocking and filtering measures, and the fog of uncertainty surrounding what China's censors will and will not permit, violate numerous of China's international obligations, including provisions of the WTO General Agreement on Trade and Services (''GATS'') and China's WTO Protocol of Accession.

The negative impact of these violations on America's premier Internet companies is profound. There are several corporate victims of China's exclusionary practices. Although there is public information identifying several large companies that have been

blocked or restricted by the Great Firewall, including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, Google, and the Huffington Post, to name a few, there are many other companies that have been blocked from access in China that I am not able to identify by name specifically because these companies fear retaliation. These companies come from various sectors, including energy, labor mediation, tourism, education, web hosting, and advertising, among others. The fact that these large, well-established companies and other fast-growing U.S. firms, so successful in every other major market in the world, are reluctant to come forward with specific information that would form the basis of a WTO complaint against the Chinese government is powerful testament to 1) the importance of the Chinese Internet market—the largest in the world—to these firms' continued success, and 2) the risk of retaliation that these firms face if they are seen as lending direct support to a trade complaint against China. Moreover, companies not yet in existence, but for which China could represent a significant business opportunity, do not even have a voice in the matter and perhaps never will.

I represent the First Amendment Coalition, an award-winning, non-profit public interest organization dedicated to advancing free speech for individuals and companies just like those denied access to China's Internet market. 1 have been working with them to address the issue of China's Internet restrictiveness since 2007. The issues regarding internet censorship and internet blockage are trade issues cognizable under the WTO, as well as freedom of speech issues. They are a harmful trade barrier to U.S. business which must be ended.

The First Amendment Coalition was able to persuade the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (''USTR'') to take the critical step of requesting detailed information from China on its internet restrictions under Article 111:4 of GATS, which mandates transparency in a Member's application of measures affecting services. OATS Article 111:4 reads as follows.

Each Member shall publish promptly and, except in emergency situations, at the latest by the time of their entry into force, all relevant measures of general application which pertain to or affect the operation of this Agreement.

USTR's request to China follows a three year effort by the First Amendment Coalition to get the U.S. government to take a tough stance to address China internet restrictions in violation of international trade rules, free speech, and human rights. The U.S. request to China under GATS Article 111:4 is highly significant not only because it is the very first time any WTO Member has utilized that provision of the GATS agreement, but also because it is the first time that the U.S. government, or any country, has made a formal submission through the WTO to China to address internet censorship.

Contrary to GATS Article 111:4, China's measures with respect to Internet services have not been published promptly, and in fact, the blocking and filtering measures have not been published at all. In this regard, we have been unable to document written directives or specific governmental instructions concerning China's measures constituting the ''Great Firewall,'' but this in effect lends support to the argument that China is not transparent in its practices related to controlling and censoring Internet content. Indeed, China has published few, if any, regulations related to Internet services. The Chinese government recently issued an official decision, currently available only in Chinese, which appears not to contain ''any new concrete policies but it does set the stage for future moves to rein in parts of the Internet at the possible expense of the commercial Internet companies.''

The historic action taken by USTR is also a significant and important step because, in addition to promoting transparency and free speech, it may result in China providing information in response to U.S. questions that will assist small and medium-sized U.S. businesses in entering the Chinese market, which they currently are unable to do given the lack of certain vital information involving use of the Internet. As USTR indicated in its press release,

[a]n Internet website that can be accessed in China is increasingly a critical element for service suppliers aiming to reach Chinese consumers, and a number of U.S. businesses, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises, have expressed concerns regarding the adverse business impacts from periodic disruptions to the availability of their websites in China.

Small and medium-sized U.S. businesses are particularly disadvantaged by China's Great Firewall because, unlike bigger U.S. companies, they do not have the resources to physically set up shop in China so they are simply excluded from the Chinese market Some of the information requested from China by USTR included the following:

With respect to China's rules governing website blocking: Who is responsible for determining when a website should be blocked? What are the criteria for blocking access? Where are the guidelines published? Who does the actual blocking? How can a service supplier know if their website has been blocked? Are decisions to block appealable? Is the process used to prevent access the same or different for foreign and domestic content?

With respect to the State Internet Information Office (''SIIO) established by the State Council: What are the responsibilities and authorities of SIIO? Will SIIO handle licenses, approval processes, and questions on filtering and other laws?

With respect to inadvertent blocking where one site is blocked when it shares an IP address with a website China has deemed harmful: How does it occur? Can it be avoided? Will Chinese authorities notify the owner of the web hosting service so that it may ensure other sites are not inadvertently blocked? How can companies resolve inadvertent blocking?

With respect to the broad nature of the eleven categories of content which Internet service providers may not disseminate: Are there any criteria to determine when content falls within the eleven categories? Are government requests to filer specific terms communicated directly to Internet information service providers? Are the same terms subject to filtering made available to Internet information service providers inside and outside of China?

With respect to the prevention of ''illegal information'' as that term is used in the White Paper on the Internet in China: How is illegal information defined? Is a written government order required for a private corporation or relevant authority to block the transmission of illegal information? What types of technical measures are service suppliers expected to use to prevent transmission of the illegal information? Are the technical measures to block illegal information applied automatically to domestic and foreign traffic? If not, how are they applied? Does Internet content from outside of China go through a separate monitoring process for illegal information than Internet content created inside of China? If so, how do they differ?

We hope and expect that the Government of China will answer these questions fully and promptly, fulfilling its obligations under the WTO to maintain an open internet and not discriminate against U.S. business.

The remainder of this submission will review in greater detail the Internet restrictions in China, the adverse trade impact caused by those restrictions, and how those restrictions would appear to violate China's international trade obligations.

I. CHINA'S INTERNET RESTRICTIONS

U.S. and foreign Internet companies have faced a long history of discriminatory treatment in China, to their disadvantage and to the advantage of their Chinese competitors. China has for many years maintained a policy, popularly known as the ''Great Firewall,'' under which it has exerted strict control over the use of the limited system of fiber optic cables that connects networks in China to the outside world. As we understand it, China has installed certain hardware, known as ''tappers'' or ''network sniffers,'' at each entry point so that when a user in China attempts to access a good or service located on a server outside of China, the tappers create mirror copies of the data packets that flow back and forth between the two servers, and the mirror copies are delivered to a set of computers that automatically review the data packets. The computers can be, and often are, pre-progammed to block a particular domain name server (''DNS''), Internet Protocol (''IP'') address, or Universal Resource Locator (''URL'') address.

The government of China (''GOC'') also employs tens of thousands of individuals whose sole mission is to search the Internet for objectionable content. Their work often results in the blocking of additional DNS, IP, and URL addresses.

Following USTR's Article 111:4 request, China defended its Internet censorship as an effort to ''safeguard the public.'' Although the ruling Communist Party claims its monitoring and blocking is to promote ''constructive'' websites, stop the spread of ''harmful information,'' and develop what it calls a healthy intemet culture, it is unclear what content is subject to blocking and often the blocked content has nothing resembling ''harmful information.'' Additionally, the blocking appears motivated by other competitive or political agendas. For example, access to the Android Marketplace was blocked within China just after Google announced it would help the Dalai Lama to visit South Africa virtually.

HARM CAUSED BY CHINA'S RESTRICTIONS

Chinese internet restrictions have disadvantaged American businesses, to the benefit of Chinese businesses. According to news reports, Facebook and Twitter, for example, have been blocked in China. In their absence, copycat websites based in China (with censored content) have been able to flourish. It seems unlikely that Facebook and Twitter will be able to regain the market share lost to their Chinese competitors even if they were unblocked at some point in the future. Chinese users have already developed a preference for certain social media sites, and it is doubtful that they would have an incentive to switch services. The loss of a huge potential market for these companies indicates the extent of the harm caused by the Chinese actions. In addition to the direct loss of access to Chinese consumers by these companies comes the loss from all of the advertisers that would ordinarily be offering their services on the Internet pages of these social media service providers. The number of Internet users in China has exceeded 500 million, growing at double digit rates since 2008, roughly twice the size of the U.S. market, which grew only 2.5 to 4.5 percent in the same timeframe.

China is now the largest market for Internet users and U.S. businesses are effectively being blocked from or only given highly restricted access to that market. U.S. companies excluded from the Chinese market are not just large tech companies but small and medium businesses including ''travel sites, engineering firms and consulting firms, which have found their sites blocked and have complained to the trade office.'' A 2011 report by the McKinsey Global Institute estimates that there is a ten percent increase in productivity for small and medium businesses from internet usage. This productivity growth is denied U.S. companies that are blocked from providing their services in China.

U.S. companies are subject to the strict controls that completely disrupt their service, or at a minimum seriously delay the transmission of information. Users of these websites, if they actually endure the wait and do not move to a competitor service supplier, suffer from a decrease in the quality of service, causing commercial harm to U.S. companies.

It would be very useful for this Commission to undertake, directly or perhaps through an economic consulting firm, an economic analysis of the overall harm caused to U.S. companies by the Chinese blockage and censorship of the internet. I think that would be one useful follow-up to this hearing.

III. CHINA'S INTERNET RESTRICTIONS VIOLATE ITS INTERNATIONAL TRADE OBLIGATIONS

The Chinese Government's actions appear to constitute various violations of WTO agreements to which China is a party, particularly the GATS Agreement. The Chinese actions in question, although often based on unwritten policies and practices, would still constitute ''measures'' that can be challenged under the World Trade Organization Dispute Settlement procedures. In this regard, the Appellate Body and various WTO panels have confirmed that actionable ''measures'' subject to WTO dispute settlement include not only written laws and regulations, but other government actions as well. Panels have also recognized the subtleties of government pressure on private companies as ''measures'' that may be challenged at the WTO.

In addition to USTR's current GATS Article 111:4 request, there are more aggressive steps that the United States could take to protect its vital economic interests. While we believe that China currently is preparing its official response to USTR's Article 111:4 request, if China fails to respond or fails to respond meaningfully, the United States would then have a readily apparent basis to initiate formal dispute settlement proceedings in the WTO. Paragraph 1 of GATS Article XXIII says ''[i]f any Member should consider that any other Member fails to carry out its obligations or specific commitments under this Agreement, it may with a view to reaching a mutually satisfactory resolution of the matter have recourse to the dispute settlement understanding.''

In addition to a potential violation under GATS Article III on transparency, there are other WTO obligations that China appears to violate with its Internet restrictions, including other GATS provisions, as is discussed below.

Initiation of a WTO dispute settlement proceeding against Chinese Internet restrictions by the United States would signal to the U.S. business community, to consumers around the world, and to China, that the U.S. government will assert its rights under WTO agreements when China fails to fulfill its WTO obligations, even in those areas that may be of a more sensitive nature. Unfortunately, these sensitivities give rise to a number of obstacles to U.S. initiation and prosecution of a formal WTO dispute against China.

As noted, it is difficult to find companies willing to come forward to support a potential case against China for fear of retaliation. Due to this fear, specific facts needed by the U.S. government to support many claims under the WTO are difficult to document. In addition, also as noted, many of the Chinese laws, regulations, policies, and practices regarding Internet services are not written down, although they are enforced de facto.

A. CHINA'S INTERNET CENSORSHIP VIOLATES OTHER PROVISIONS OF GATS

China made specific commitments regarding market access and national treatment for services in various service sectors. China's Internet policies would appear to violate many of these specific commitments under the GATS, including in the areas of Data Processing Services, Photographic Services, Telecommunication Services, Mobile Voice and Data Services, Audiovisual Services, Tourism and Travel Related Services, and Transport Services. By pursuing these policies, China denies market access to U.S. companies and discriminates against the services of U.S. companies in favor of Chinese companies.

Although U.S. companies offer a wide range of services over the Internet, four service sectors that would appear to suffer disproportionately under Chinese policies are: (1) Advertising services (the primary revenue source for U.S. suppliers of Internet-based services, particularly those operating search engines, social networking, and data/photo sharing, is through advertising and U.S. services suppliers obtain revenue from the development and posting of targeted advertisements on their webpages and facilitating access to other websites by their users clicking on the advertisements); (2) Data processing and tabulation services (relevant U.S. services suppliers are providing consumers with the ability to access certain tools over the Internet that enable them to make, edit, and share videos or photos, or other data and that allow them to search for content on other websites and the U.S. services supplier is necessarily processing data for the consumer and providing a tool to access defined data bases or the Internet generally); (3) On-line information and database retrieval; and (4) Videos, including entertainment software and (CPC 83202), distribution services (''Video/entertainment distribution services'').

There follows below a brief discussion of some of the specific GATS claims that might be made against the Chinese measures in question and some of the factors that would need to be considered in prosecuting such claims.

I. NATIONAL TREATMENT

China's restrictions on U.S. Internet companies appear to violate the national treatment provision in Article XVII of the GATS, which provides that ''each Member shall accord to services and service suppliers of any other Member, in respect of all measures affecting the supply of services, treatment no less favourable than that it accords to its own like services and service suppliers.''

The Chinese measures at issue would seem to fall within one or more of at least four services subsectors for which China has inscribed a specific commitment, without limitation on national treatment, in its WTO Services Schedule. As such, China's measures must comply with the obligations in Article XVII for these subsectors. Current Chinese treatment of U.S. Internet companies, including filtering and blocking through the ''Great Firewall'' and mandated disabling of certain service functions, modifies the conditions of competition in favor of Chinese suppliers such as Baidu (considered the ''Google'' of China); as such, these measures are inconsistent with Article XVII of the GATS.

If China's measures were challenged in a WTO proceeding, a Panel would first determine whether China's measures are indeed ''affecting'' the supply of these services. As noted by the Appellate Body in EC–Bananas III:

[T]he term of ''affecting'' reflects the intent of the drafters to give a broad reach to the GATS. The ordinary meaning of the word ''affecting'' implies a measure that has ''an effect on'', which indicates a broad scope of application. This interpretation is further reinforced by the conclusions of previous panels that the term 'affecting' in the context of Article III of the GATT is wider in scope than such terms as 'regulating' or 'governing.'

It is therefore not necessary for China's measures to be directly regulating or governing the business of U.S. Internet service providers, but merely that the measures have an effect on these services, and their providers' ability to do business in China. China's measures clearly have ''an effect on'' these services—indeed, a very detrimental one.

Second, the United States would need to demonstrate that China's measures accord ''less favorable'' treatment to U.S. suppliers than to China's domestic suppliers of ''like'' services. As set forth in GATS Article XVII:3, the test for less favorable treatment is whether the measure ''modifies the conditions of competition in favor of services or service suppliers of' China compared to like services or services suppliers of the United States. Persuading a panel in this regard would require the production of extensive data and specific information demonstrating the competitive disadvantage suffered by U.S. companies due to China's measures. A comparison of blockages of websites, upload times for content of websites, and other significant impediments to Internet service providers would likely reveal significant and swift loss of market share by U.S. providers.

2. MARKET ACCESS

Article XVI:2 of the GATS prohibits Members from maintaining or adopting quantitative limitations on service operations or service output. China's restrictions on certain U.S. Internet companies' services constitutes a de facto quantitative limitation on such services, therefore violating this provision.

3. DOMESTIC REGULATION

Under Article VI of the GATS, for services sectors in which specific commitments have been undertaken, China must administer its measures in a ''reasonable, objective and impartial manner'' and, for all services sectors, must ensure that tribunals or procedures are available for the prompt review and remedy of administrative decisions. China's restrictions on U.S. Internet companies are subjective and non-transparent, and there are no tribunals or procedures for the review of these administrative decisions. The restrictions therefore violate China's obligations under Articles VI:1 and VI:2(a) of the GATS.

China's ''Great Firewall'' filtering and blocking practices would also seem to violate the GATS Annex on Telecommunications, which states in paragraphs 4 and 5 that ''each Member shall ensure that relevant information on conditions affecting access to and use of public telecommunications transport networks and services is publicly available'' and that ''{e}ach Member shall ensure that any service supplier of any

other Member is accorded access to and use of public telecommunications transport networks and services on reasonable and nondiscriminatory terms and conditions.'' In addition, paragraph 5(c) imposes an obligation on China to ensure that U.S. services suppliers may use the public telecommunications transport networks and services ''for the movement of information within and across borders'' and ''for access to information contained in databases or otherwise stored in machine-readable form'' in the United States or in the territory of another WTO Member. China's filtering and blocking on Internet content clearly restricts the availability of these telecommunications networks in a discriminatory fashion.

CONCLUSION

We appreciate the Commission holding this hearing and inviting me to testify. We also appreciate the efforts of USTR in submitting the GATS 111:4 questions. We urge the Commission to take into account our views in its ongoing work on this issue. We also urge the Commission to monitor China's responses to these questions as well as USTR's continuing efforts on this very important issue. An open and accessible internet in China is a prerequisite to U.S. success in the Chinese market, and a goal that we must continue to fight for until it is achieved.

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE BREAST CANCER RESEARCH AUTHORITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 12, 2011

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following letter regarding S. 384:

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, December 13, 2011.

Hon. DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ISSA: I am writing concerning S. 384, to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research. I wanted to notify you that the Committee on Energy and Commerce will forgo action on S. 384 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

This is done with the understanding that the Committee on Energy and Commerce is not waiving any of its jurisdiction, and the Committee will not in any way be prejudiced with respect to the appointment of conferees or its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response confirming this understanding with respect to S. 384 and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, December 13, 2011.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding the Committee on Energy and Commerce's jurisdictional interest in S. 384, to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research, and your willingness to forego consideration of S. 384 by your committee.

I agree that the Committee on Energy and Commerce has a valid jurisdictional interest in certain provisions of S. 384 and that the Committee's jurisdiction will not be adversely affected by your decision to not request a sequential referral of S. 384.

Finally, I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Iran Threat Reduction Act of 2011.

I want to thank both the Chairman and the Ranking Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for their efforts on passing this important legislation.

I am a proud co-sponsor of this bill.

Iran's efforts to obtain nuclear capabilities and its support for terrorism form one of our most serious foreign policy challenges.

And, the Iranian regime's treatment of its own people horrifies the world.

This legislation sends a strong message to the Iranian government—there is a price to pay for ignoring the will of the international community.

It is no secret that Iran has been a destabilizing and dangerous force in the Middle East.

From repeatedly threatening our ally Israel to providing support for attacks on U.S. troops in the region, Iran has sought at every turn to thwart U.S. and international efforts.

Let's be clear though—while the Iranian government conceives of these actions, it is the cruel and twisted core of the Iranian regime—the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps—that executes its daily threats and brutalities. That's why it is so important that this measure targets the IRGC.

This legislation isn't all that we must do. It is also time for tough and lasting pressure on those who do business with the Central Bank of Iran.

The world must not allow Iran to obtain nuclear capabilities, for the sake of the region and the world.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2011 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.