

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to The Veterans Employment, Education, and Health Care Improvement Act (H.R. 3016).

H.R. 3016 includes important bipartisan legislation to improve the health and opportunities of veterans. This legislation will include podiatrists within the Department of Veterans Affairs definition of physician, extending the same promotions and leadership positions within the VA as other physicians. H.R. 3016 also includes numerous standalone bills that will improve the quality of health care and economic opportunity for veterans, including establishing the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration. I wholeheartedly support these key provisions of H.R. 3016, but the pay is unacceptable for our brave service members and their families.

When our brave women and men signed up to serve, we made them a promise. We assured them clearly defined benefits that were guaranteed to them upon completion of their duties. H.R. 3016 as currently written breaks that promise. Not only does it harm the students who depend on these housing allowances to attend school, it says to our service members that the terms of the deal they made with their government have been changed without their knowledge or consent. It is essential that Americans know exactly what their service to their country entitles them to. Passage of this legislation will severely undermine that agreement.

Title III of this legislation will reduce by fifty percent the housing allowance provided to children who have had Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits transferred to them. This cut will begin one hundred and eighty days after the enactment of H.R. 3016. Furthermore, the legislation provides no grandfather clause that will exempt the families of current service members from this harmful cut.

Again, I support the important provisions of this legislation that will improve the lives of our veterans, and I remain committed to working in a bipartisan fashion to see these enacted. However, I cannot support legislation that is paid for by breaking a promise to our veterans. When Americans sign up to serve, they must be certain that the benefits guaranteed to them will be waiting when they return home. As Members of Congress, upholding this commitment is one of our most important duties.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT IMPROVED COMPLIANCE AWARENESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Act. This legislation will help ensure no community in America ever experiences what is happening in Flint by ensuring that federal and state regulators promptly notify a local community if there are elevated levels of lead in their water systems.

Specifically, the bill requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to notify a local water system if EPA receives data indicating high lead levels in the water. The local water system must immediately notify their customers, and if they do not act quickly then EPA must notify local residents themselves.

It is critical that a community is immediately notified when there is a problem with their drinking water. Transparency is essential to ensuring water lead contamination never poisons another community, and this bill helps us achieve this important goal.

The facts about the Flint crisis are being gathered right now through multiple investigations, and every person responsible must be held accountable for the lack of appropriate action. Government at every level failed the people of Flint, but this is a man-made disaster led by the state of Michigan, and we must take action at the federal level to prevent this from ever happening again.

Every Member of the Michigan delegation co-sponsored this bill, and we thank our colleagues Congressman KILDEE and Congressman UPTON for their good work on it. This is an example of what can happen when we work together to solve the problems facing our nation, and we need more of it. Clean water is one of the most fundamental, basic rights we should guarantee anyone living in America.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE
MICHAEL GARVER "MIKE" OXLEY

SPEECH OF

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to honor and remember former Representative Mike Oxley who we lost last month. Today would have been his 72nd birthday, so our presence here tonight is a wonderful way to commemorate his life of service. I remember Mike most for his big smile, which could be seen from across the Chamber, and his love for his wife Patricia and his son Chadd.

Mr. Oxley grew up understanding the importance of service to his country, which he carried out to the very end. He started his career working as a Federal Bureau of Investigations agent in Boston and New York City. He frequently noted this experience directed his Congressional decisions and that set him apart from other Members.

He returned to his hometown of Findlay—Flag City—in 1972 to begin his career in elected office when he won a seat in the Ohio House. For a decade he sharpened and honed his legislative expertise, serving him well for the next chapter of his life. In 1981, he won a special election to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I remember Mike relished working with his fellow Ohio delegation, especially the late Representative Paul Gillmor. Mr. Oxley dedicated his years of federal service to reforming our banking and financial laws. As the Chairman of the Committee on Financial Services, from 2001 to 2006, Ox demonstrated his leadership of Congress' response during very troublesome financial times following the tech bubble struggles of the early 2000s, Wall Street turmoil that followed the 9/11 attacks and corporate scandals including Enron. While Mr. Oxley and I were often on opposite sides, I will always remember him as jovial, collegial, and someone who had a great passion for public service.

I was proud to work with him on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission as we stopped a Pentagon recommendation to reduce the size of the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima. This effort saved the jobs of 750 people who continue to manufacture tanks and sections of armored vehicles, including the best Army tank in the world, the Abrams.

I was saddened when I learned that Mr. Oxley had been diagnosed with lung cancer. In his fight against cancer, he demonstrated his true spirit, and his eternal dedication to service by joining the Lung Cancer Alliance in 2010. Always fighting for others even amidst his own battle, he became the Board Chairman in January of 2014.

It was an honor and privilege to serve with him and to pay tribute to his life. May his soul rest in peace and may his family be comforted by the memories they share of their times together and the joy he brought to living.

BORDER TO BORDER BROADBAND:
BETTER TOGETHER

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my Minnesota colleague Congressman COLLIN PETERSON, to recognize the Blandin Foundation and all they do for rural Minnesota, and particularly for their efforts to provide broadband internet service to all Minnesotans.

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