

The primary reason why any action short of the repeal of laws authorizing privacy violations is insufficient is because the federal government lacks constitutional authority to force citizens to adopt a universal identifier for health care, employment, or any other reason. Any federal action that oversteps constitutional limitations violates liberty because it ratifies the principle that the federal government, not the Constitution, is the ultimate judge of its own jurisdiction over the people. The only effective protection of the rights of citizens is for Congress to follow Thomas Jefferson's advice and "bind (the federal government) down with chains of the Constitution."

Mr. Speaker, those members who are unpersuaded by the moral and constitutional reasons for embracing the Identity Theft Prevention Act should consider the overwhelming opposition of the American people toward national identifiers. The overwhelming public opposition to the various "Know-Your-Customer" schemes, the attempt to turn drivers' licenses into National ID cards, the Clinton Administration's Medical Privacy proposal, as well as the numerous complaints over the ever-growing uses of the Social Security number show that American people want Congress to stop invading their privacy. Congress risks provoking a voter backlash if we fail to halt the growth of the surveillance state.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I once again call on my colleagues to join me in putting an end to the federal government's unconstitutional use of national identifiers to monitor the actions of private citizens. National identifiers threaten all Americans by exposing them to the threat of identity theft by private criminals and abuse of their liberties by public criminals. In addition, national identifiers are incompatible with a limited, constitutional government. I, therefore, hope my colleagues will join my efforts to protect the freedom of their constituents by supporting the Identity Theft Prevention Act.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MILITARY RETREEE HEALTH CARE TASK FORCE ACT

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to introduce the Military Retiree Health Care Task Force Act of 2001. This legislation will establish a Task Force that will look into all of the health care promises and representations made to members of the Uniformed Services by Department of Defense personnel and Department literature. The Task Force will submit a comprehensive report to Congress which will contain a detailed statement of its findings and conclusions. This report will include legislative remedies to correct the great injustices that have occurred to those men and women who served their country in good faith.

Let us not forget why we are blessed with freedom and democracy in this country. The sacrifices made by those who served in the military are something that must never be

overlooked. Promises were made to those who served in the Uniformed Services. They were told that their health care would be taken care of for life if they served a minimum of twenty years of active federal service.

Well, those military retirees served their time and expected the government to hold up its end of the bargain. They are now realizing that these were nothing more than empty promises. Those who served in the military did not let their country down in its time of need and we should not let military retirees down in theirs. It's time military retirees get what was promised to them and that's why I am introducing this legislation.

HONORING JUNE PINKNEY ROSS

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today I salute and honor the indomitable June Pinkney Ross of Galveston, Texas.

I was recently honored to have contributed to the "Book of Letters" being presented next week to Ms. Ross in celebration of her twenty-seven year career as Executive Director of the Galveston County Community Action Council.

The residents of Galveston County, particularly the disenfranchised and the children who could not speak for themselves, have been well served by June Ross' unselfish acts of caring, sharing, kindness and understanding of their plight.

It is well known that June Ross will literally fight to the bitter end for the right thing, is bluntly and sometimes frighteningly honest about how to address the needs of the poor and does not mind sharing her unedited opinion on any subject that is placed on the table. We who know her and have been privileged to work with her always knew that we could count on her to go after grants for which her agency qualified and, once the money was received, to disburse it where it was most needed. I have enjoyed working with June Ross and always felt that she would make a fair assessment of any situation that she was confronted with and react accordingly.

My one regret during our relationship is that I never got a chance to sample her cooking. Ms. Ross' radio cooking class was quite successful and listeners would bombard the station for her recipes. I am sure that she approached that job with the same diligence and commitment that she has given to the State of Texas and Galveston County throughout the years. I want to also take this opportunity to let her know that I am grateful for her service to our great nation as a member of the United States Military.

Mr. Speaker, I salute June Ross for all she has done to make the community better (United Way, one of the original founders of Hospice) and hope she knows how much she is respected and loved.

CHIEF PHILLIP MARTIN—CHAMPION OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY

HON. TOM DeLAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce to the RECORD the following editorial that appears in Indian Country Today. As the piece points out, Chief Phillip Martin of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians has for more than a quarter of a century used the free market as a tool to better the lives of his fellow tribe members and neighbors.

Self-reliance and not government dependency is the secret to prosperity. But there is no need to tell Chief Martin that fact. He has lived his life promoting the economic vitality of his people and they have reaped the benefits of his progressive thinking. I salute Chief Martin for all he has done to further the cause of freedom—for his people and for our nation.

[From Indian Country Today, Dec. 27, 2000]

MISSISSIPPI CHOCTAWS: THE BENEFITS OF PEACE CHIEFS

If a people are going to strive to achieve economic prosperity, the reduction of conflict, the acceptance and understanding of peace, is a most useful strategy. Mutual understanding, common cause and unity of action become possible. Little ever improves from virulent conflict and nothing moves forward in war. Leadership with vision often works actively to reduce conflict while putting its major efforts toward the positive building of fair community governance and efficient enterprises. At this moment of shifting political climates, when the future of Native nations is clouded by uncertainties on the national level, it seems proper to salute a consistent peace chief, one who led his own people from severe poverty and obscurity to sustained prosperity and regional political prominence.

He is Phillip Martin, long-time chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. A man of great perseverance, the 75-year-old Martin has led and guided his 6,000-member Choctaw tribe since 1959. Periodically, yet consistently reelected to the tribe's highest office for more than 40 years, Phillip Martin is universally credited for the success of the Choctaw, who are well posed to enter the 21st century as a self-determined people. While other, more conflictive tribes have deepened their economic dependencies and allowed spirals of violence to weaken their body politic, the Mississippi Choctaws have built steadily for more than 30 years. A well-entrenched tradition remembers the attitude of historical chief, Pushmataha, who in 1811 reasoned against war with their neighbors while Tecumseh appealed to the Choctaw warriors to join his war parties. While he had been a great warrior as a young man, Pushmataha opted for peace as he aged as a chief.

While Tecumseh has come down through the history as the greater leader, and Pushmataha is the lesser known. Interestingly, the response of Pushmataha, who coolly analyzed the horrible suffering war would bring, was actually quite sophisticated and just as completely dedicated to the preservation and survival of his people. He pointed out how his own tribe had painstakingly worked out friendly relations with their white neighbors. Their relations were reciprocal and as a result, things were going well.