

of the first people her neighbors turned to when they needed a strong voice on their behalf.

As a Commissioner, Ida's job has not always been easy. With tedious budget reviews and resolutions to consider, she has often said that at first she felt like she was in the middle of a three ring circus. Her fellow commissioners have described Ida as a calming force during tense meetings—always asking the sensible question, what will this do for the residents? While she may have looked like the mild-mannered patron of the board, Ida has been one of the most outspoken members when addressing the treatment of public housing residents, especially her beloved seniors. She has shown a remarkable dedication to her job and has done much to enrich the lives of many families and seniors. Most recently, Ida started a partnership with Yale University with the hope that the program will connect Crawford Manor residents with the rest of their community through neighborhood events and trips to the theater. Ida brought a wealth of knowledge to the board from her years of experience as a tenant—demonstrating a unique commitment to ensuring real change for her neighbors and fellow public housing residents.

After nearly two decades of service as a resident representative, you can be sure that Ida's retirement from the Board of Commissioners will not impede her from continuing to advocate for public housing residents. Though she will certainly be missed in her official capacity, I am sure her strong voice will continue to be heard. It is with the greatest thanks and appreciation for her outstanding service to our community that I stand today to honor Ida Wells on this very special occasion and extend my very best wishes to her for many more years of health and happiness.

VERMONT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT  
CONGRESSIONAL TOWN MEETING

**HON. BERNARD SANDERS**

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 10, 2001*

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the outstanding work done by participants in my Student Congressional Town Meeting held this summer. These participants were part of a group of high school students from around Vermont who testified about the concerns they have as teenagers, and about what they would like to see government do regarding these concerns.

I submit these statements to be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, as I believe that the views of these young persons will benefit my colleagues.

ON BEHALF OF WILL BABCOCK—REGARDING  
TRADE SKILLS FOR YOUNG VERMONTERS,  
MAY 7, 2001

Will Babcock. Like I said, I'm Will Babcock, here representing Youth Build. Skateland, from Williston, got closed down recently. I'm trying to reopen it. I have plans to talk to J.D. Real Estate to see how much the lease per year is, and if I can get it cheaper for a youth organization. Because, let's face it: In Burlington, there is really nothing to do but play basketball, hang out

at the mall or hang out on the streets. So I think skating is a fun, healthy activity. It is a good thing to do. I'm in love with it, you know. Let's see. I have talked to everyone I can about it. That is why I'm here today, to see if I can get any help from Bernie or anybody with political power to get the ball rolling, get it open again. I've organized a skate club at school. I have got people at school doing it. All my teachers are interested in it. And, recently, to go roller skating, I've had to go to Latham, New York, three hours away. It is three hours away, four hours of roller stating, three hours back. Because, you know, I can't really afford a hotel room, so I have to come back the same night. I have talked to Pat McGirk, the guy that got the skate park down here by the waterfront started. I have been talking to him to see if I can get something going there. I would like to try and find some backers who think this is a good idea and want to help me get it going. I have gone to a couple of other meetings besides these, with churches and town halls and stuff. So it is getting around. People are starting to hear about it again. I'm hoping that it is more than just "hear," that people will start saying: "Yes, I'm going to help this kid do it. It is a good thing to do." Like I said, I have support from Youth Build, Middle Friend and Family, and everyone that roller skates, probably about a good 20, 25 of us. I need help in any way possible, so if you guys know somebody that can get into an idea like that or anything, you know, find out who I can ask for money, you know, for grants and stuff. Pretty much that's it. If you have any questions or anything.

ON BEHALF OF RICHARD WEST—REGARDING  
VOTING REFORM, MAY 7, 2001

Richard West. There has never been an event more politically controversial for this generation than the 2000 presidential election. As the weeks progressed after the election, millions of voters began to question the method for choosing the person who will become the leader of the free world. Is it fair? Is it accurate? Does it represent the people? In a nation where less than 50 percent of the population participate in electing their leader, questions such as these could alienate people who at one time considered voting from actually going to the polls. While many people addressed various means for fixing problems with the electoral process, no one has come up with a method that would allow for a smooth transition between the ballot box and the presidency. None of the methods I will outline below is a perfect solution, but each tries to maintain the tradition while minimizing the chances for errors or misrepresentation. Method 1, electoral vote splitting. For most of its existence, the Electoral College has not posed much controversy, but periodic elections have shown that even a system that works the majority of the time can have some basic flaws. Many of those problems stem from the winner-take-all nature of the Electoral College system, where a winner of the state gains all of the state's electoral votes, even if he wins only by a small popular margin. The 2000 presidential election in Florida, where both Bush and Gore received approximately half, 48.8 percent, of the electoral vote, is a prime example of how the Electoral College disproportionately favors the winner of a state over the loser. Electoral vote splitting is an excellent method for eliminating much of the sense of disproportionality. While the system preserves the winner-take-all tradition for most popular elections, it splits the electoral votes between the Republican and

Democratic candidates proportionally to the percentage of the popular vote if the race is tight. Figure 1, which you have a copy of in front of you—and, hopefully, everybody has a copy in the audience—shows generally how the process of electoral vote splitting works. Since this method only affects close elections, it is necessary to define what a "close election" actually is. A close election is when two primary candidates' popular vote percentages are within a certain predetermined range. In this formula, delta is the average of two candidates' percentages, the range is which the blue line in figure 1 is slanted. If the candidates fall within this range, then the number of electoral votes (E) received by each candidate is given by the equation  $E = (P - Ave)ET/2 + 1/2Et$ , where "E" is rounded, except when the vote falls within the error margin described below. If the candidates do not fall within this range, the number of electoral votes received by the winner equals the total electoral votes, and the number received by the loser equals zero. In either case, the sum of the number of electoral votes received by each of the candidates equals the total electoral vote (Et) of that state. One of the advantages of this method is that it takes into consideration the possibility of error or controversial votes. Many examples of controversial votes were exhibited in the 2000 Florida presidential election. A specific controversy was the sudden appearance of 19,000 votes that had previously been uncounted. These votes could have been legitimate or they could have been fraudulent. This method deals with situations like this similarly to New York election law. New York law states that, if there is a controversy over a certain number of votes, a candidate's winning margin must be greater than the number of controversial votes. Electoral vote splitting adopts this method by stating that if both fall within the margin epsilon, then the electoral votes are split equally, since it is impossible to determine a clear victor. Obviously, the electoral vote-splitting method is designed to accommodate two main candidates. The reason behind this decision is that, for the past 80 years, only two candidates (a Republican and a Democrat) have had a good chance of winning the presidency. While it is still possible to have three candidates in contention, it is unlikely this will occur. If this does happen, however, the electoral vote-splitting method will not work, unless Method 2 (outlined below) is also incorporated into voting reform. Method 2, "second candidate" or transferable voting. Ralph Nader's 2000 presidential campaign has been criticized as the cause of Gore's defeat in Florida. People believe that if Nader did not run, then his supporters would have supported Gore instead of them, and thus won Gore the election. Transferable voting, used in France and other European countries, would have given the option to voters of specifying a candidate for their second choice. If their first-choice candidate receives the lowest number of votes in a state election, he is eliminated, but his votes are transferred to the second-choice candidate specified by his supporter's ballots. The votes are recounted, and the process continues until there are only two remaining candidates (see figure 2, which is in the speech). It is these candidates who would then receive the electoral votes through the electoral vote-splitting method. Method 3, bubble and double-blind voting. There have been many claims that much of the controversy surrounding the 2000 presidential elections in Florida was caused by voters not

understanding the "complicated" punch-card ballot. While most of these claims were made by angry Gore supporters, there are cases where these ballots are difficult to read. For instance, if you are elderly and have poor eyesight, it might be difficult to align a name to a punch hole. To eliminate, or at least reduce, the number of errors caused by misreading ballots, a simple ballot and a checking system needs to be implemented. One possible ballot style could mimic the SAT bubble answer sheets, formerly called Scantron sheets. Each candidate's name and party is listed next to the bubble that has to be filed for that candidate. These ballots would then be read by a bubble reader, and the votes tallied. Not only would the system be accurate, it would also allow for quick recounts. Granted, the method is similar to the optical vote-o-matic system, but the College Boards have been using bubble sheets for years without any major problems, unlike the optical vote-o-matic system, which has been proven inaccurate by research presented in the Bush v. Gore U.S. Supreme Court case. To increase voter confidence that their vote will be counted correctly, a system of double-blind checking should be established. The voter would first pick up a ballot and vote, then scan it through a machine within the voting booth that tells the voter the candidates they chose. If the ballot is correct, the voter places it in the ballot box; if not, the scanning machine marks it "void," and the voter goes to be issued a new ballot (the old ballot serving as proof that they are not voting more than once). Since many states feel their voting machines cause no problems, there is no immediate justification for the expenditure of money to replace working machines. As such, the federal government should provide the money necessary for the implementation of a nationwide standard of voting and double-blind checking, and make each state upgrade its equipment so that it meets this standard for any federal election. This would be expensive, at first, to implement, but, in the long run, it will cut back on the number of problems that are caused by outdated equipment, and it would save on costs of staff needed to count and recount ballots. While none of these reform methods can be implemented overnight, by the 2004 presidential election, it should be possible to have at least a nationwide voting standard in action that allows for double-blind checking. As for electoral vote splitting and transferable voting, these methods would be harder to implement. While both of these methods are fair and relatively easy to incorporate into the voting process, they would require a small leap of faith by conservative Americans who maintain that the system is extremely good as it stands. This statement is true, but the U.S. electoral system has not changed much over the past 225 years, and thus little is done to correct flaws exposed periodically. If these reforms had been in place for the 2000 presidential election, the entire controversy in Florida never would have occurred, and Al Gore, the popular victor, would have won the presidency, 272 electoral votes to 266 votes. Thank you very much.

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TRIBUTE TO HARRY PREGERSON

**HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 10, 2001*

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an exceptional individual, Harry

Pregerson. He is not only the oldest active Judge of the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and a man of legendary accomplishments, he is a good friend whose wise counsel I rely upon. I am pleased that he will be honored by the San Fernando Valley Bar Association on September 29, 2001, with the prestigious Stanley Mosk Legacy of Justice Award.

Judge Pregerson began his legal career, after graduating from Boalt Hall Law School, in private practice. In 1964, he was named to the Los Angeles Municipal Court and subsequently to the Superior Court. In 1967, President Johnson appointed him to the United States District Court for the Central District of California. Later, Judge Pregerson was named to the Ninth Circuit by President Carter. Each of these prestigious appointments were a direct result of his hard work, talent and dedication. During these years, he garnered an impressive reputation and earned the respect of his colleagues.

In addition to his judicial career, Judge Pregerson has been a longtime advocate for the homeless, especially homeless veterans. He has overseen the construction of thousands of dwelling units for homeless veterans in Los Angeles County. In 1988, Judge Pregerson started the Bell Homeless Shelter, a shelter which today provides a full array of social services to homeless individuals in East Los Angeles. Recently, he helped bring together local law enforcement authorities, judges and county officials to create a new program that assists veterans convicted of minor violations complete a rehabilitation program and return to a productive life. His special affinity for helping veterans probably comes from his own distinguished military service. He himself is a war veteran who was seriously wounded in the battle of Okinawa during World War II.

The San Fernando Valley Bar Association's recognition of Judge Pregerson is not surprising since the event commemorates commitment to the legal profession and the public. Judge Pregerson's distinguished service on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and numerous public service projects clearly demonstrate his very strong commitment to the law and the community.

It is my distinct pleasure to ask my colleagues to join with me in saluting Judge Pregerson for his outstanding achievements, and to congratulate him on receiving this prestigious award.

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APPROVING EXTENSION OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT WITH RESPECT TO PRODUCTS OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

SPEECH OF

**HON. BOB RILEY**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 6, 2001*

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to an increasingly serious problem affecting the public trust and truth in advertising. Today as we debate H.J. Res. 51, to approve

the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment with respect to the products of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, I wish to make my colleagues in the House aware of the misleading marketing of the Vietnamese basa fish as catfish.

Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana farmers who endured, and continue to endure, the significant capital risk and time investment to raise catfish—notice I use the term catfish—should not be made to compete with a foreign product bearing no similarity to North American catfish. Vietnamese Pangasius, also known as the basa fish, has flooded the American market and now accounts for 20% of all catfish sold in the United States. This basa fish, however, is not catfish yet it is labeled catfish and even bears the industry logo.

American catfish farmers, who have worked for over a quarter of a century and spent half a billion dollars in research and development, deserve better. They deserve the assurance that their government will take the steps necessary to ensure their product retains the public trust and is not compromised in any way. Similarly, when a consumer purchases catfish they have the right to expect they are purchasing grain-fed, pond-raised North American freshwater catfish. The basa fish, however, is not grainfed, nor pond-raised, neither is it the American species.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues carefully consider the erroneous marketing of basa fish before reaching any decision on extending nondiscriminatory treatment to the products of Vietnam.

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IN RECOGNITION OF OPPORTUNITY, INC. ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 10, 2001*

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Opportunity, Inc. an exceptional organization located in Highland Park, Illinois. This extraordinary enterprise is a fine example of the initiative needed to help more people move from welfare to work allowing them to pursue the American dream.

Opportunity, is a not-for-profit contract manufacturer that employs over 125 persons, most of whom have developmental, physical and/or emotional disabilities. Founded in 1976, the company's mission is both to provide a mainstream plant environment in which "Handicapable" people can reach their full potential by working and earning a paycheck and to provide customers such as Baxter International, Allegiance Healthcare, Searle, Gerber, UreSil, and Medline with the best possible service.

As everyone understands, budget constraints compel us to look for ways to effectively address important needs without government subsidies, and Opportunity is leading the way in this regard. A model of community response, entrepreneurship, and innovation, the company demonstrates how competitive and productive "Handicapable" employees can be.