

May 3, 2001

TRIBUTE TO MARY HOLDSAMBECK  
OF HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

**HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.**  
OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 3, 2001

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments and honor Mrs. Mary Holdsambeck on the receipt of the Madison County Democratic Women's Division, "Joan Carpenter Cashin Lifetime Achievement Award." Today's recognition sheds light on the years of good deeds Mary has accomplished.

She has been a vital leader in the Madison County Democratic Women since she moved to Huntsville. She has served two terms as Chairman of the group and has been involved in state politics as a member of the State Coalition for passing the Equal Rights Amendment and in the current Alabama Constitutional Reform Movement. She has even been a candidate, running in a special election for the State of Alabama House of Representatives.

However, Mary's commitment to her community is not limited to the political arena. She played a pivotal role in helping to organize Hope Place, now Crisis Services, serving abused women and families. She has also contributed her time and manifold talents to Trinity United Methodist Church, the Wesley Foundation and the American Association of University Women.

I believe this is a fitting honor for one who has given so much to the betterment of our community and our nation. I commend Mary for her lifetime of achievement and I want to express my sincere gratitude for her bold work for the Democratic Party and the patriotic ideals she believes in.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. WM. LACY CLAY**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 3, 2001

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, this morning I was testifying before the Senate Government Affairs Committee on the need for election reform and I was unable to reach the House floor in time for rollcall vote No. 97, a motion to adjourn. I would like to state that I intended to support this motion and would have voted 'yea.'

Also, I would like to take this opportunity to share my Senate testimony with my colleagues in the House.

#### STATEMENT TO SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM, MAY 3, 2001

Mr. Chairman, Senator LIEBERMAN and Distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to detail the election problems that occurred in the City of St. Louis during the November 2000 Presidential Elections and to add my voice to those calling for meaningful and comprehensive election reform.

Last November's general election in the city of St. Louis exposed a voting system that is riddled with serious election procedural mistakes; major deficiencies in poll

#### EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

worker training; obsolete and inadequate equipment; and gross errors in maintaining accurate voter registers that resulted in the disenfranchisement of thousands of qualified voters in my district.

These factors led to an election conducted amid widespread voter chaos at polling places throughout the city—the result of a record voter turnout and the arbitrary and capricious removal—by the St. Louis Board of Elections—of over 50,000 qualified voters from the city's active voter register.

When these voters—most of whom were African American—arrived at the polls to cast their votes, they were told by election officials they were not on the active voter register and that they would not be allowed to vote at their normal voting precinct.

Due to inadequate communication between polling precincts and the Central Election office, election workers were unable to verify the eligibility of these voters.

Additionally, poll workers had not received training for dealing with these situations, so they ultimately directed all of the affected voters to go to the Central Election Board office downtown to verify their status.

The resulting confusion at the Central Election office led to a near riot as thousands of eligible voters attempted to cast their vote, some to no avail.

To make matters worse, while the Election Board was clearly unprepared for the massive voter turnout, they were also slow to react to the growing voter confusion they created as the day progressed.

An equally troubling was the Election Board officials' resistance to reasonable remedies designed to ensure that every qualified voter be afforded the opportunity to cast his or her vote without obstruction.

Clearly, such a situation cannot and must not be tolerated. Such conditions not only create confusion among voters; they also threaten the integrity of the Electoral process itself.

It is imperative that federal, state and local officials join in a common effort to reform how we conduct our elections. The nation should never again be subjected to the voting travesty of the last presidential election. The system is broken and it is time that we admit it and work towards common sense solutions.

First, we must take legislative action to provide the necessary funds for modern, state-of-the-art uniform voting equipment, paying particular attention to lower income communities that have long been burdened with outdated and obsolete voting equipment.

And to the maximum extent possible, we must mandate uniform ballot designs and eliminate the current 40-year old punchcard system.

We must also require that local election officials develop comprehensive training standards for their workers and hold them accountable for implementing such training.

Lastly, and most importantly, we must mandate election procedure reform to ensure that qualified voters are not arbitrarily or inadvertently removed from active voter rolls.

This was a major failure in the City of St. Louis and I suspect this situation is widespread across the country.

Voters should not continue to suffer disenfranchisement because election officials are unwilling or unable to safeguard their fundamental right to vote.

If we fail to act now, we will not only inflict further damage to the democratic process, we will also fail in our sworn duty to

protect and defend the fundamental rights of every citizen.

RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY  
INTERNATIONAL  
BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL  
WORKERS LOCAL UNION 180

**HON. GEORGE MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 3, 2001

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California and I, rise today to recognize the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 180 as this organization celebrates its 100th anniversary.

One hundred years ago on May 6, 1901, Local 180 was chartered by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Since its inception, Local 180 has been integrally connected to shipbuilding at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo. Electrical workers helped build the 513 ships, that were launched at Mare Island between 1859 and 1970, from the Saginaw, a wooden hulled steamer, to the Drum, a nuclear powered submarine.

When war was declared with Germany on April 6, 1917, union workers helped turn Mare Island and Vallejo into a commercial hub that could support the war effort.

In the years following World War I, no ships were launched at Mare Island and the workers turned to use their skills to help build the Carquinez Bridge.

In the 1930s, shipbuilding began again at Mare Island. The union shop was reestablished and wages and benefits that had been lost during the previous decade were renegotiated.

During World War II, shipbuilding and union activity at Mare Island escalated. Union members are proud that 95% of all electrical work that directly supported the war effort nationally was performed by the IBEW under union shop conditions.

In the second half of the 20th Century, Local 180 members helped construct Monticello Dam, the second Carquinez Bridge, the Exxon Refinery, the Benecia Industrial Park, and the Anheuser Busch Brewery as well as the country's nuclear submarine fleet at Mare Island.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of its rich history and traditions, it is appropriate that we acknowledge and honor today this pioneering union local and its members who have made an immeasurable difference in the lives of working families and the community in Napa and Solano Counties.

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