

May 15, 2001

TRIBUTE TO DR. BETTY WARD  
FLETCHER

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2001*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Dr. Betty Ward Fletcher. Dr. Fletcher is a trail blazer, a persistent advocate, a remarkable woman and outstanding leader. She has proven time and time again that one person can make a difference.

Dr. Fletcher, a native of Rankin County, received her undergraduate degree in Sociology from Tougaloo College. She received her master and doctoral in Social Work from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

From 1975 through 2000, Dr. Fletcher dedicated her life to providing information and ideas on behaviors of societies to Jackson State University. She was the founding director of the Student Intervention and Information Program of Interdisciplinary Alcohol/Drug Studies Center. She has worked in various scholarly positions such as Associate Director of Graduate Program in Alcohol/Drug Studies, Instructor, Associate Professor, Acting Director, Acting Graduate Dean and Vice President for Research and Development of Sociology Department. In addition, she excelled her instructional focus on research and evaluation of sociology by serving as an adjunct Professor at the University of Southern Mississippi, School of Social Work.

Dr. Fletcher's research focus has been the study of social and behavioral correlation of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. She has generated over \$17.5 million in externally funded initiatives, while simultaneously fulfilling her administrative duties.

In 1999, Dr. Fletcher was Jackson State's first-ever Vice President for Research and Development. During her leadership, the University garnered a \$2 million donation and a \$12.9 million research award. This award was to serve as the coordination center for the Jackson Heart Study, the largest study of cardiovascular disease ever undertaken in the nation.

In 1999, Dr. Fletcher was named Interim President of Jackson State University by unanimous consent of the Board of Trustees, State Institutions of Higher Learning. She was then labeled a "charismatic, courageous and visionary leader" for her success in launching the School of Engineering and building a strong support base with the business community for the University.

In 2000, she was appointed as Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) and had oversight for a \$438 million budget and 4,168 employees. Dr. Fletcher made a positive difference and a goal was to build cooperative working relationships with other state agencies.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Fletcher is proudly recognized by the state of Mississippi and the United States of America as a visionary for all people. On behalf of the people of the 2nd Congressional district, I salute her.

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA J. SMITH

**HON. STEVE C. LaTOURETTE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2001*

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a very special constituent, Barbara J. Smith, on the occasion of her receipt of the Ohio Women's Bar Association's Justice Alice Robie Resnick Award of Distinction. This award is the OWBA's highest award for professional excellence and is bestowed annually on a deserving attorney who exhibits leadership in the areas of advancing the status and interests of women and in improving the legal profession in the state of Ohio. It gives me great pleasure to wish Ms. Smith my warmest congratulations on this truly special occasion.

Barbara Smith is currently a shareholder of McDonald, Hopkins, Burke & Haber Co., L.P.A. in Cleveland. She attended Old Dominion College (B.A., 1968); Pepperdine University (M.B.A. 1974, magna cum laude); and Case Western Reserve University (J.D. 1977, magna cum laude).

She is a former President of the OWB (1994-1995) and is one of its original members. The OWBA was initially formed in 1991 and is the only statewide bar association within Ohio solely dedicated toward advancing the interests of women attorneys while encouraging networking and the creation of a statewide mentor program for women attorneys. The 2001-2002 membership year celebrates the OWBA's 10th Anniversary.

Barb has also served as President of the Cleveland Bar Association. At the time she served, she was only the third female president in its 125-year history.

At the same time, Ms. Smith has been active in the community on issues affecting women and minorities, including Ohio Attorney's Assault on Domestic Violence, a Charter Fellow and member of the Cleveland Bar Foundation Board of Trustees and a member of The Federated Church—Multi-racial, Multi-cultural Task Force.

Ms. Smith has been recognized for excellence in her legal work including Who's Who in American Law, Who's Who in America and The Best Lawyers in America for Health Law.

On May 21, 2001, OWBA President Helen Mac Murray will be presenting Ms. Smith with the Ohio Women's Bar Association's Justice Alice Robie Resnick Award of Distinction at its Annual Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio.

It gives me great pleasure to rise today, Mr. Speaker, and join the OWBA in congratulating Barbara Smith and wishing her continued success.

## INTRODUCTION OF DUTY DRAWBACK LEGISLATION

**HON. KEVIN BRADY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2001*

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to change the drawback and other trade laws in order to make

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their interpretation, administration and implementation less cumbersome for the U.S. Customs Service. More importantly, the provisions of this legislation will ease the regulatory and administrative burdens imposed by the current regulatory structure on U.S. companies by making them more competitive in the global marketplace when competing against foreign exports of similar or like products.

Since this issue is very technical Mr. Speaker, let me briefly describe what duty drawback is and how this legislation will help. Specifically, duty drawback is the refund of 99% of the duty paid to Customs on an imported product when the imported product, or a product that is substantially similar or commercially interchangeable with the imported product, is later exported from the U.S.

For example, a manufacturer of widgets may import a widget into the West Coast of the U.S., paying a duty of US \$10. The same company then produces the same type or quality of widget in Texas and exports it to Mexico. The company may claim a refund of US \$9 of the duty paid on the West Coast import as it is substantially similar to or commercially interchangeable with the exported widget.

Therefore, drawback levels the playing field and allows U.S. companies to remain competitive in the international market when competing against foreign companies for export sales and in export markets.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. I look forward to working with my colleagues to see it enacted into law.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE BLACK FARMERS FAIRNESS ACT OF 2001

**HON. J.C. WATTS, JR.**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2001*

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Black Farmers Fairness Act. This legislation will bring to closure a series of injustices our government has committed to a large number of black farmers throughout the country. For many years, this group of dedicated farmers experienced various acts of discrimination by the United States Department of Agriculture.

In 1997, three brave farmers entered into a lawsuit with USDA to correct injustices they had experienced. Two months later they were joined by 11 additional farmers. As more and more black farmers learned of and joined this lawsuit, the suit was changed to a class action suit. For months, government attorneys blocked settlement of their complaint due to a "statute of limitation" argument.

In 1998, the House extended the "statute of limitations" for the black farmer lawsuit—allowing justice to run its full course. Without this provision, many of these farmers would have not been legally permitted to receive consideration for the civil rights complaints. Before this provision, government attorneys argued that they could not settle complaints beyond the two-year period of each complaint.

Finally, it appeared that justice would prevail. On April 14, 1999, a court ruled in a class