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To the people and royal family of Thailand—thank you. Your compassion and friendship is much appreciated.

INTRODUCING A BILL TO MAKE
FEMA AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY
HEADED BY A QUALIFIED DIRECTOR

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing a bill to reestablish the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as an independent agency, and to require that its Director be someone with appropriate training and experience.

The undeniable shortcomings of the federal response to the tragic effects of Hurricane Katrina have shown that FEMA's most recent director, Michael Brown, was not qualified for the job—in fact, he really was in over his head. Now that he has resigned, Congress should begin the process of strengthening FEMA and assuring Americans that Federal emergency management efforts will be handled by a capable and effective leader.

As a first step, I think we should revisit and reverse our decision to fold FEMA—formerly an independent agency—into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

I was never completely comfortable with that decision. When the House considered the legislation to establish the new Department, I voted for an amendment (offered by the gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. OBERSTAR) to keep FEMA independent. I did so because, as I said at the time, I feared FEMA's core mission and focus would be lost in the new bureaucracy.

It was argued that FEMA—as the central agency in charge of disaster response and emergency management—should constitute the heart of the new DHS. But FEMA had been primarily engaged in and especially effective at responding to natural hazards, not terrorism. We should have left FEMA outside the new department, or at a minimum transferred its Office of National Preparedness to the new department, while leaving FEMA's Disaster Response and Recovery and Mitigation Directorates intact.

Although the independent-FEMA amendment failed, I voted for the overall bill while expressing the hope that “the President will continue to work with the Congress to make sure the agencies moved to the new Department will be supported in their many other important duties even as they focus anew on their security roles.”

Unfortunately, recent events have given horrific proof that I hoped in vain and that my fears were well-founded.

Therefore, the bill I am introducing today will reestablish FEMA as a separate agency. It also will require that its Director be a person with appropriate formal training and at least two years of experience as the head of a disaster-management agency of either a State or a political entity—a city, county, or other area—smaller than a state but with a population of at least one million people.

To provide continuity and insulation against politics, a director, once nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, would serve a 6-year term—although of course, as an Executive Branch official he or she would be subject to the direction and control of the President and thus could be removed by the President.

Reorganizing FEMA is only part of the necessary actions to respond to the tragedy and devastation on the Gulf Coast. But I think it is a necessary part, and I think this bill would help us be better prepared for the next emergency.

TEXAS DISTRICT AND COUNTY
ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th meeting of the Texas District and County Attorneys Association. The men and women who serve the state of Texas as prosecutors are the foundation of the criminal justice system. As a prosecutor for 8 years and a district judge for 22 years, I witnessed firsthand the remarkable dedication to the law that is exhibited by county and district attorneys and their staffs. Texans are truly privileged to have such an extraordinary group of legal minds who have answered the call to public service.

On November 2, 1905, less than 50 prosecutors met in Dallas, Texas at the first meeting of the Texas District and County Attorneys Association. In 1970, the TDCAA re-organized for the purpose of offering training and technical assistance to prosecutors. The TDCAA has made great strides since that time, currently providing training to two-thirds of the prosecutors and staff in Texas. The 2005 meeting will take place in Corpus Christi, with more than 1100 prosecutors and staff members in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a lifetime member of the Texas District and County Attorneys Association. Our district and county attorneys make communities safer while holding criminals accountable for their actions, and I commend the TDCAA for setting the bar with regards to training prosecutors. I wish the Texas District and County Attorneys Association all the best as they look forward to another 100 years of success.

TRIBUTE TO WERNER SCOTT

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there are few things I enjoy more in this job than getting the opportunity to shine the spotlight on truly deserving people who serve as a source of inspiration to the rest of us. Werner Scott of Irving, Texas, is one of those people, and I would like to pay tribute to him today.

Werner Scott is the founder and President of Advantage Marketing Group (AMG), and is

recognized as a visionary in the world of enterprise and sports marketing responsible for initiating many ground breaking concepts.

Werner's credits include the brand positioning of Dallas Cowboys superstar Emmitt Smith, yielding “Brand Emmitt”, “Emmitt Zone” and “Emmitt Zone For Kids” franchises. He has also worked with several corporations like American Airlines, Frito-Lay, and Bank One Texas, providing strategic market development expertise.

Under his guidance, AMG was the key architect in staging the NFL Run To Daylight and the NFL Fast Man competitions, and working with NBC Sports to produce the ongoing Bayou Classic, the Super Bowl of Black College Football.

Prior to finding AMG, Werner started his career in 1979 in brand marketing and sales holding a number of posts with Xerox and never looked back. He climbed through the ranks at Xerox becoming an invaluable executive within the organization from 1979–1985.

A distinguished military and honor graduate from New Mexico State University, Werner majored in human resources management, with a minor in marketing sales.

Werner Scott has not only overcome tremendous challenges in this competitive industry, but he is a brave person who stands by the courage of his convictions. He has a strong passion for civic and charitable organizations including, The Open Doors Foundation, Academies of Excellence, and the Center for the Study of Sports in Society.

He is a truly extraordinary human being, and it is my hope that others will be inspired by his determination to succeed and the strength of his spirit.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 3132, CHILDREN'S SAFE-
TY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2005

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, as an OB-GYN who has had the privilege of bringing over 3,000 children into the world, I share the desire to punish severely those who sexually abuse children. In fact, it is hard to imagine someone more deserving of life in prison than one who preys on children. This is why I have supported legislation that increases penalties for sexual assaults on children occurring on Federal land.

However, Mr. Chairman, I cannot support this bill because it infringes on the States' constitutional authority over the prevention and punishment of sex crimes. The late Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and former United States Attorney General Ed Meese, two men who no one has ever accused of being “soft on crime,” have both warned that, although creating more Federal crimes may make politicians feel good, it is neither constitutionally sound nor prudent. Rehnquist has stated that, “[t]he trend to federalize crimes that traditionally have been handled in state courts . . . threatens to change entirely the nature of our federal system.” Meese stated that Congress's tendency in recent decades to make Federal crimes out of offenses that have historically

been State matters has dangerous implications both for the fair administration of justice and for the principle that States are something more than mere administrative districts of a nation governed mainly from Washington.

H.R. 3132 not only creates new Federal programs and crimes, it instructs the States to change their laws to conform with Federal dictates. This violates the Constitution, and can weaken law enforcement. For example, one of the provisions of the new law requires States include those convicted of misdemeanors in their sex offender registries. By definition, misdemeanors are nonserious crimes, yet under this legislation State officials must waste valuable resources tracking non-serious sex offenders—resources that should be going to tracking those who are more likely to represent a real threat to children.

Thus, once again we see how increasing the role of the Federal Government in fighting these crimes—even when it is well intended—only hamstrings local and State law enforcement officers and courts and prevents them from effectively dealing with such criminals as the locals would have them dealt with—harshly and finally.

Mr. Chairman, Congress could both honor the Constitution and help States and local governments protect children by using our power to limit Federal jurisdiction to stop Federal judges from preventing States and local governments from keeping these criminals off the streets. My colleagues should remember that it was a Federal judge in a Federal court who ruled that the death penalty is inappropriate for sex offenders. Instead of endorsing a bill to let people know when a convicted child molester or rapist is in their neighborhood after being released, perhaps we should respect the authority of State courts and legislators to give child molesters and rapists the life or even death sentences, depending on the will of the people of those States.

Just as the Founders never intended the Congress to create a national police force, they never intended the Federal courts to dictate criminal procedures to the States. The Founding Fathers knew quite well that it would be impossible for a central government to successfully manage crime prevention programs for as large and diverse a country as America. That is one reason why they reserved to the States the exclusive authority and jurisdiction to deal with crime. Our children would likely be safe today if the police powers and budgets were under the direct and total control of the States as called for in the Constitution.

Finally Mr. Chairman, this legislation poses a threat to constitutional liberty by taking another step toward creating even more Federal “hate crimes” laws. So called “hate crimes” add an extra level of punishment for the thoughts motivating a crime—as if murder or robbery motivated by “hate” is somehow more offensive than murder or robbery motivated by greed or jealousy. Laws criminalizing thought, instead of simply criminalizing acts of aggression against persons and property, have no place in a free society.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, since H.R. 3132 further burdens State and local law enforcement with unconstitutional Federal mandates that may make it tougher to monitor true threats to children, I encourage my colleagues to reject this bill. Instead, I hope my colleagues will work to end Federal interference in State laws that prevent States from effectively

protecting children from sexual predators.

CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF
CHARLOTTE RILEY CALLAHAN

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today, I am happy to congratulate Jenni and Paul Callahan, natives of Greenville, South Carolina, on the birth of their beautiful baby girl. Charlotte Riley Callahan was born in Alexandria, Virginia, on September 15, 2005 at 8:36 a.m., weighing 7 pounds, 14 ounces and measuring 21.5 inches long. She has been born into a loving home, where she will be raised by parents who are devoted to her well-being and bright future.

Her father Paul serves as a Legislative Correspondent in my office and is a tremendous asset to the Second District of South Carolina. His strong work ethic, attention to detail, and pleasant personality make him a treasured member of my staff. Today, I am pleased to congratulate the Callahan family on Charlotte's birth.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROSA PARKS' REFUSAL TO GIVE UP HER SEAT ON THE BUS AND THE SUBSEQUENT DESEGREGATION OF AMERICAN SOCIETY

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2005

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, nearly 50 years ago on December 1, 1955, history was altered considerably by the refusal of a Black woman to give up her seat to a White man on a public bus. This woman was Rosa Parks, a seamstress and the secretary of the NAACP from Montgomery, AL.

Mr. Speaker, on that day Rosa Parks was not only tired from a hard day at work, but also of the torment and persecution endured by Blacks of her day. Based solely on the color of her skin, she had encountered much discrimination throughout the years, and finally, on that day, decided she was fed up.

We all know the story, but let me remind my colleagues. On that Thursday evening in December, Mrs. Parks decided that she would not give up her seat for a White man to sit down in the “Colored” section, and was consequently arrested for violating segregation laws.

Ms. Parks' arrest marked the point of conception of the civil rights movement. What followed can be described as no less than monumental. The Black community of Montgomery, AL, decided to boycott the bus system—that by the way, relied heavily on their 75 percent ridership for revenue. Montgomery's Black community, led by a young Martin Luther King, Jr. who endorsed nonviolence as a means to achieve equality, chose to walk, carpool, or ride bicycles instead of riding the bus.

Despite huge revenue losses, the Montgomery bus system refused to alter its segregation policies.

Despite endless provocation from Whites, who often resorted to acts of violence and harassment, the Black community continued its boycott for over a year.

Finally, approximately a year after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus, on November 13, 1956, the Supreme Court declared Montgomery's bus segregation ordinance unconstitutional. Shortly thereafter, the Federal Interstate Commerce Commission banned segregation on all interstate trains and buses.

Although there were many other subsequent laws and decrees that helped to desegregate America, Rosa Parks' courage was the incipient act that sparked the stand for equality across the Nation—culminating in the civil rights movement.

It is for these reasons that I strongly support this resolution honoring Mrs. Parks' bravery. I thank my good friend, Representative JOHN CONYERS, for spearheading this noble effort and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

A TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL L.
JACKSON

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Samuel L. Jackson, a man who through hard work and dedication has become one of the most successful and well-respected attorneys in the state of California. As his friends, family and colleagues gather to pay tribute to Mr. Jackson's remarkable career and to celebrate his retirement, I ask all my colleagues to join me in saluting this great American success story.

Sam was born in 1947 in Pensacola, Florida. At the age of four, Sam's parents separated. Thereafter, Sam's mother, Annette, raised her six children alone while working two jobs. Mrs. Jackson taught her children that education was the key to success, and Sam graduated from high school in segregated Pensacola, Florida. However, despite the fact that Sam was on the honor roll for nearly all of his childhood, he was unable to attend college immediately due to the lack of scholarship money available to graduates of all-black high schools.

To earn money for college, Sam joined the United States Air Force, where he served honorably from 1966 until 1970. Sam's military career included stateside service at Mather Air Force Base in Sacramento and Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, as well as thirteen months in Vietnam. After receiving numerous medals, ribbons, and awards, Sam was honorably discharged, and returned home to enroll at Sacramento City College.

While still in the Air Force and stationed at Mather, Sam served as best man in a friend's wedding, accompanying the bride's sister Esther. The next time Sam and Esther walked down the aisle together, it was as bride and groom. They married in 1970 upon his return from Vietnam, and recently celebrated their 35th anniversary. Sam and Esther have one child, Andre Reginald.