

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

## HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 19, 2000

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on October 18, 2000, I was unavoidably detained and therefore unable to cast my vote on rollcall No. 531, H.J. Res. 631, on Agreeing to the Resolution Honoring the Members of the Crew of the Guided Missile Destroyer U.S.S. *Cole* Who Were Killed or Wounded in the Terrorist Attack on that Vessel in Aden, Yemen, on October 12, 2000. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in honoring the members of the crew of the U.S.S. *Cole* who died on October 12th as a result of a cowardly act of terrorism, and I send my heartfelt condolences to their families, friends, and loved ones. I also rise to honor those serving on the U.S.S. *Cole* who were wounded in the attack, and wish them a speedy recovery. Finally, I salute those members of the crew who fought valiantly to save their ship and rescue their wounded shipmates. Indeed, I wish to express my deep gratitude to all of the men and women of our Armed Forces who routinely put their lives on the line.

## ACTION TO PROMOTE GREATER RETIREMENT SECURITY SHOULD BE A PRIORITY

## HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 19, 2000

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, we are nearing the end of this 106th Congress—but we have not finished all the work that needs to be done. When the new Congress meets next year, it will find a long list of unfinished business. An important thing on that list will be action to support and improve the ability of all Americans to look forward to fiscal security in their years of retirement. I want to take this opportunity to outline my thinking about the steps that Congress should take toward that goal, in several areas.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security is our most important and most successful program dealing with retirement security. Today its guaranteed benefits provide the primary source of income for 66 percent of Americans over age 65, and are especially important for the 42 percent of the elderly for whom Social Security is all that keeps them above the poverty line. It is also an important compact between generations and across divisions based on income levels.

I strongly support maintaining adequate and appropriate guaranteed defined benefits for current Social Security recipients, and for people who will retire in the future—but that does not mean that I oppose any changes in Social Security.

Earlier this year, I supported the successful effort to remove the earnings limit that could reduce Social Security payments to people retiring at age 65. And there are some other additional steps to revise Social Security that we should take right away. For example, we should limit the so-called "windfall elimination"

offset so that it will not apply to individuals whose combined monthly income is under \$2,000. And we should again allow blind individuals to earn up to the social security excess earnings threshold without losing benefits.

Further, as we look ahead, we must recognize that Social Security faces future demographic problems because retirement of the "baby boom" generation will greatly increase the number of beneficiaries in comparison with the number of people paying into the system.

Congress will have to address this problem, and should do so sooner rather than later—but, obviously, that will take time. In the meantime, our first priority should be to avoid making the problem harder. That means—Social Security's current surplus revenues should not be spent for any other purpose. That way, the Treasury Department will use these revenues to reduce the publicly-held debt. By paying down the debt, we will reduce the amount of interest the government otherwise would have to pay, freeing valuable resources and increasing our options to bolster Social Security for the future.

Congress also must avoid excessive and ill-targeted tax cuts that would endanger our ability to protect Social Security and Medicare and strengthen them for the future.

## SAVING FOR RETIREMENT

Social Security is indispensable, but people will be better off if they can also have other sources of retirement income. So, we should make it easier for them to save and invest and accumulate assets. Previous action has led on those foundations in some important ways, including—Increasing the amount that individuals can put into Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and benefit from favorable treatment under the tax laws.

Enabling people to make additional contributions to 401(k) or similar retirement accounts, and making it easier to take full advantage of such retirement plans.

Making it easier for people to maintain their retirement accounts when they change jobs.

Making it more feasible for employers—especially small businesses—to establish and maintain retirement plans for their employees.

## OTHER PROPOSALS

As we all know, both Vice President GORE and Governor George W. Bush, have proposed additional new initiatives. Under each, the federal government would assist people to set up, maintain, and benefit from individual investment accounts. But there is a big difference.

Under Governor Bush's plan, the federal assistance would come from allowing people to decide to divert part of their Social Security taxes into these accounts. In contrast, under the Vice President's plan general federal revenues—not Social Security revenues—would be used to add to the money people choose to put into tax-free individual savings accounts.

I am concerned about the effects of the Bush proposal on Social Security. Diverting revenues out of Social Security now will make it harder to maintain adequate guaranteed benefits in the future. And that effect is compounded because the diverted amounts cannot be used to pay down the debt, so it will be necessary to pay hundreds of billions of dollars in additional interest.

Those who support privatizing a portion of Social Security (the plan proposed by Gov-

ernor Bush and by my Republican opponent, Ms. Carolyn Cox) claim that differences in benefits will be made up from the higher returns that can be earned by investing a portion of individual account balances in stocks and equities. But many economic forecasters have suggested that for this claim to be true, stock returns for the next 75 years will have to equal those of the last 75 years—a rate that seems unlikely to be sustained. It seems to me that to rely on that scenario would require a dramatic leap in faith that our national economic growth will continue the record pace of the last decade.

Moreover, the costs of administering individual retirement accounts have to be taken into account, and even conservative estimates suggest that these costs would be high enough to cut accumulations in individual retirement accounts by 20 percent over a worker's lifetime.

Diverting funds away from the Social Security Trust Fund strikes me as an unnecessary and potentially dangerous step in "reforming" Social Security. It has an element of risk in some ways similar to those involved in having the government invest the Trust Fund directly in the securities markets—which was one of the reasons I declined to support President Clinton's earlier proposal for such investments, even though the President at least tried to address the questions of stock market volatility.

In short, both the Bush plan and a similar one supported by my opponent, Ms. Cox, strike me as not the right way to proceed as we work for the long-term stability of Social Security.

I also have some questions about the Vice President's plan, but the fact it would not mean that kind of diversion—it is "Social Security plus," not "Social Security minus"—means that it would not start out by making it harder to assure that Social Security will continue to remain as the indispensable safety net for future retirees.

## MACON IRON AND PAPER STOCK, INC.

## HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 19, 2000

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Macon Iron and Paper Stock, Inc. today for their recent recognition by the Department of Labor. Macon Iron recently won the prestigious Director's Award for Safety at the annual Georgia Department of Labor's Health Safety and Environmental Conference.

State Labor Commissioner Michael Thurmond bestowed this award upon Macon Iron at the seventh annual meeting in Atlanta along with its sister companies General Steel, Industrial Alloy Supply, and Commercial Doors and Accessories.

This award is presented to companies for criteria involving safety performance, contributions to the community, the sharing of safety information, and civic responsibility. Macon Iron was chosen from almost 100 companies in the state of Georgia who participate in the labor department's safety awards program, and was selected for their exceptional safety programs.

I congratulate the employees of Macon Iron and its sister companies for their hard work

and participation in making safety a top priority at work. The company is also to be commended for its endeavors to create a safe working environment for its staff. Macon Iron has exhibited great care for its people and should be an inspiration among the industry. In fact, the company has already taken steps to educate other businesses in the local area by holding safety seminars.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this accolade is well deserved. It is my hope that by honoring Macon Iron in this way and in recognizing the company's many accomplishments, we can make an example of them that other companies in the State of Georgia and throughout our great nation will strive to follow.

**MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO MARK HALLER**

**HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 19, 2000*

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to Mr. Mark Haller, an outstanding individual who passed away on October 10, 2000 at the age of 87.

Mr. Haller was born on June 27, 1913, of a Serbo-croatian immigrant mother newly arrived in Steelton, Pennsylvania. Orphaned at the age of five when his mother passed away, Mr. Haller found himself surrounded with politically aware immigrant men from Central Europe while being raised by a foster mother in a boarding house. Mr. Haller left his foster home as a teenager and hitch-hiked to Seattle, Washington, where he became active in grassroots politics.

Mr. Haller was an active participant in the union movement, and the peace, civil rights and feminist movements of the 1960's. In 1961, Mr. Haller and his wife, Frankie, a very dear friend of mine, co-founded the Midway Democratic Club to function as an issues oriented Democratic Party Club. Since that time, the Midway Club has met every month, and until recently, the Midway Newsletter has featured Mr. Haller's monthly columns. For the last six years of his working life, he was union representative for the members of the Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers at the Longview Fibre Company in Bell, California.

In addition to his passion for political activism, Mr. Haller was also well known for his dedication to his family. He is survived by Frankie, his wife of 52 years, his sons, Michael and Marko, granddaughter, Regina Allen, grandsons Michael and Kenneth, his dog, Buddha and cat, Snoopy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues today to join me and Mark Haller's family and friends in paying tribute to an outstanding American whose lifelong dedication and zeal exemplified the highest ideals of citizenship.

**SCIENTIFIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG WOMEN**

**HON. SUE W. KELLY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 19, 2000*

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the need to attract young women to-

wards scientific studies and to honor a program which encourages girls to pursue careers in this area.

Science and technology have taken on a large role in our society. The need for people skilled in these fields is critical to our future success, yet there is a disturbing trend—young women are shying away from science studies. Just 29 percent of high school girls say that they wish to become a scientist, half of the percentage of boys.

This dichotomy is what makes programs such as the IBM Technology Camp for Young Women so critical. Designed to show the importance of math, science and technology, the camps provide a positive image of these careers. There are currently five camps in three states encouraging the scientific talents of young women.

Schools now report that more girls are signing up for math and science courses. Parents and educators have noticed increased self-esteem among female students. Finally, this bond between employees and students continues through an e-mentoring program, allowing the interest to grow.

As a time when science plays an important role in our lives, I urge parents, teachers and businesses to help us foster the role of young women in science and commend IBM for its novel and innovative idea.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OLYMPIC ATHLETES OF SOUTH ORANGE/MAPLEWOOD**

**HON. DONALD M. PAYNE**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 19, 2000*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring a group of hometown heroes as they are honored at a ceremony on October 20, 2000. We in New Jersey are so proud of the outstanding athletes in the South Orange/Maplewood community who competed in the Olympics in Australia. The OlympicFest 2000 Committee, an organization formed by members of the local community, are celebrating the unique contributions of the athletes of South Orange and Maplewood to the 2000 U.S. Olympic Team.

History was made in Australia when three members of a family presented the United States at the Olympics. South Orange/Maplewood is home to Joetta Clark Diggs, Jearl Miles-Clark and Hazel Clark, who all competed in the 800-meter run. Jearl Miles-Clark won a gold medal in the 4 by 400 relay. Coaching the girls was J.J. Clark, brother of Hazel and Joetta, and husband of Jearl Miles-Clark.

Also being honored at the ceremony is an outstanding athlete, Tom Auth of Maplewood who competed in lightweight 4 man sculls. Coach John Moon of Seton Hall whose team won 5 gold medals, 1 silver and 1 bronze, will be recognized for his achievements. Shana Williams of Seton Hall will be honored as the winner of a bronze medal in 1996 and a participant in the 2000 Olympics.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in sending our congratulations and best wishes to all of these fine athletes who exemplify the positive spirit of competition and striving

for excellence in behalf of our country. As residents gather to honor them at "Olympic Square South Orange," we wish them continued success.

**RECOGNIZING ROBERTA ROWE FOR A LIFETIME OF COMMUNITY SERVICE**

**HON. JO ANN EMERSON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 19, 2000*

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of my constituents who passed away several years ago after a long, rich life. The community is still impacted by her wonderful example of patience and kindness. I salute Mrs. Roberta Rowe who, 26 years after her passing, will have a park in Sikeston, MO, rededicated to her for her inspirational life.

Originally from Georgia, Mrs. Roberta Rowe came to Southeast Missouri with her five children, Mable, Alma, Eloise, Kathryn, and Carlton.

She soon became involved in her community as the leader of the Rainbow 4-H Club where she held meetings, arranged educational projects for the members and accompanied the club to Lincoln University every year for the annual state conference.

Mrs. Rowe was also an active member in Smith Chapel United Methodist Church throughout her life. She was a kindergarten teacher for the church, and often worked with the children in various activities. You could always find her cheerful spirit at a church function.

Always involved with the Bootheel community, Mrs. Rowe traveled with the Community Choir for monthly choir concerts in the African American Churches of the region. Monthly she would go to Benton along with her Smith Chapel friends, Mrs. Rosie Johnson, Mrs. Flora Holt, and Ms. Edna to learn about effective homemaking techniques through the University of Missouri Extension Club. She served as a teen supervisor during the summer, teaching them about lawncare and landscaping.

Although she did not complete high school herself, she pushed her children to pursue a strong education. Her twins, Carlton and Kathryn, completed college at Lincoln University, and the rest of her children spent time in college as well.

Mrs. Rowe's dedication to her family, her church, her community and education should be an inspiration to us all. Those who followed her example learned that "greatness comes from service." It is her greatness that is remembered in Sikeston, and by her family.

**RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN**

**HON. OWEN B. PICKETT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 19, 2000*

Mr. PICKETT. Mr. Speaker, Rabbi Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim located in my congressional district in Virginia Beach, made the following