

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 385, 384, 383, 382, 381, 380, 379, and 378, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, September 9, 10, and 11, I was unavoidably detained and thereby absent for votes on rollcall numbers 375 through 384. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall number 375, "yea" on rollcall number 376, "yea" on rollcall number 377, "yea" on rollcall number 378, "yea" on rollcall number 379, "yea" on rollcall number 380, "yea" on rollcall number 381, "yea" on rollcall number 382, "yea" on rollcall number 383, and "yea" on rollcall number 384.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 384, I was home in Michigan on Wednesday participating during the day and evening in ceremonies commemorating September 11, 2001. As a result, I was not able to vote on H. Con. Resolution 464. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea".

SUPPORT A DEMOCRACY AND OUR ALLY: TAIWAN DESERVES TO BE PART OF THE UNITED NATIONS

HON. DOUG OSE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, Taiwan is one of the few independent nations that has not been allowed to join the United Nations as a full member. And it looks like opposition to their bid is again forming among those who would keep Taiwan and its 23 million citizens from joining their rightful place among the community of nations.

Simply put, Taiwan's 23 million people deserve a voice and a seat in the United Nations. Taiwan's population is larger than those of two thirds of the U.N. member states. Over the last 50 years Taiwan is the world's 17th largest economy, with the 15th largest trading volume. Taiwan's economic performance has contributed greatly to world prosperity. At a time when the U.N. continues to ask the United States to contribute more money to its budget, why is it turning away a willing, dues-paying member?

Perhaps the best reason the United States should continue to support Taiwan and its bid for U.N. membership is shared values. Taiwan is a vibrant democracy and endorses the ideals of peace, human rights, and development. More importantly, Taiwan is able and willing to carry out all U.N. Charter obligations.

Some have argued that granting Taiwan membership in the U.N. would be unacceptable to the People's Republic of China. However, Taiwan has repeatedly stated its willingness to work with the Chinese mainland. Taiwan leaders have repeatedly appealed to PRC leaders for peaceful settlement of political disagreements between the two sides. In addition, Taiwan hopes that Taiwan and the PRC will work together to help maintain peace and stability in Asia and Pacific. The United Nations should encourage a dialogue between Taiwan and China—not ignore it. Granting Taiwan U.N. membership is a positive first step to permanent peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Finally, it is worth noting that Taiwan's exclusion from the U.N. violates the U.N. principle of universality. Remember that the U.N.'s mission is to "reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small."

As President Bush addresses the U.N. on this very day, and talks about the threats facing the world and those nations truly fighting for peace, I urge him to remember our friend and ally who is not allowed to join him at the U.N.'s headquarters in New York. I urge him to remember Taiwan and to support them in their bid to join that great body of free nations.

TRIBUTE TO SISTER LORRAINE BIEBEL

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the work and amazing accomplishment of a Franciscan nun who has left a lasting mark on Springfield, Missouri. She has overcome adversity and criticism to win the respect of many of her peers by creating important social services that have helped the less fortunate people of Springfield, Missouri.

In 1983, Sister Lorraine Biebel took on the temporary assignment of opening a soup kitchen in Springfield. Since then, Sister Lorraine has remained at the helm of what has become known as the Kitchen Ministry. Today the ministry that Sister Lorraine started has a \$3.5 million budget, nine buildings, a small army of volunteers and a reputation for helping anyone with a legitimate need.

Sister Lorraine has been a vigilant visionary and leader to meet the demands of those less fortunate. It has been a labor of love and faith. Biebel's holistic approach has seen the conversion of an old hotel into a 90-room shelter with three dormitories and transitional housing. The Family Nurturing Center offers childcare for infants and pre-schoolers, as well as after school programs. There are also counseling services, walk-in medical services, dental clinics, and mental health counseling. In addition, it offers referral services, job programs, outreach programs for at-risk youth, literacy and

GED training. Sister Lorraine helped to create a free store for residents and a thrift store for the community that offers free household items, clothing, and food for those people trying to improve their family unit or get back on their feet.

In praise of the God she serves, Sister Lorraine's faith is what has driven her to these accomplishments. Sister Lorraine has been a tireless servant of God's compassion for the disadvantaged, the homeless, and the countless volunteers who have rallied to support the programs.

With the naming of her successor, Tobias Meeker, Sister Lorraine is retiring but her work will not end. She hopes to reactivate the Little Portion Retreat Center where she lives in Republic, Missouri. There she promises to continue to nurture the spiritual health of others in a less stressful environment.

Sister Lorraine Biebel and the Kitchen Ministry are a wonderful example of the substantial social changes faith based initiatives can bring to a community's less fortunate population. Working with the federal and state government, local charities, churches of many denominations, and generous donors, Sister Lorraine has molded a multifaceted ministry that provides shelter, clothing, health care, counseling, education, job skill training, and spiritual guidance. The Kitchen Ministries have professionally and cost-effectively provided these services and care in a manner in which the federal government could not. The ministry is the work of many caring people, led by a woman of great faith whose work has touched thousands of lives.

We wish Sister Lorraine good health and best wishes in her retirement.

H. CON. RES. 401, RECOGNIZING THE HEROISM AND COURAGE DISPLAYED BY AIRLINE FLIGHT ATTENDANTS EACH DAY

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 401, a resolution to recognize the heroism and courage displayed by airline flight attendants each day.

The anniversary of the September 11 terrorist hijackings and attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon is just two days away. All Americans remember and mourn the lives lost that tragic day.

The world has changed for all of us. Before that time, flight attendants and their families and loved ones lived and worked with the knowledge that rare instances of mechanical failure or hijackers could endanger their lives. But no one imagined the dreadful assault of September 11, when terrorists turned four airborne planes into missiles used to attack thousands of Americans.

That day, flight attendants again demonstrated their courage in the face of extreme danger. From all that we know of the final minutes on those flights, flight attendants worked to communicate with the ground, and in all likelihood helped prevent Flight 93, which crashed in rural Pennsylvania, from taking many more lives.

I would like to bring my colleagues' attention to the heroism of Betty Ong, a flight attendant

on American Airlines Flight 11, whose family lives in my district of San Francisco. On September 11, Betty called the airline reservations center from the plane to sound the alarm and provide information about the terrorists who had taken over the plane. I am aware of the enormous pain and suffering her family has been experiencing and extend them my deepest sympathy. It is an honor to pay tribute to Betty and express my appreciation for her life and bravery in the face of enormous danger.

Now, even stepping onto an airplane is an act requiring willpower and courage for many Americans. Yet flight attendants do it every day. Flight attendants deserve our respect, cooperation, courtesy, and commendation for their hard work and courage their hard work. I urge my colleagues to vote for this resolution.

HONORING BONNIE ELOISE RUSH
MILAM

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Bonnie Eloise Rush Milam. It is fitting that today we honor this great lady, a proud American who gave so much to her country and it's military by founding the Melody Maids.

Eloise Milam was born in a house on the bay shore of Anahuac, Texas. Her family wound it's way through Texas, to Oregon and then eventually settled in Beaumont. She began to take piano lessons at age five and loved playing and singing on local programs, eventually becoming a member of the chorus at Beaumont High School.

After graduation, she continued through college and after as a member of numerous music and drama organizations. She sang in church and community concerts and with the Beaumont Light Opera Company.

By 1942, Eloise Milam had a very large group of private voice students. She was frequently asked to arrange programs for community affairs. When asked to assist with a bond rally at the Jefferson Theater, she presented her students as a choral group. Because the newspaper insisted on having a name for the group, they quickly decided on the Melody Maids. A new career was born.

The Melody Maids traveled countless times from coast to coast, singing for conventions and programs of all sorts, but primarily for military installations and especially veteran's hospitals. They made four tours of Europe, several more to England, three to the Far East, seven to the Far North, four to the Caribbean, five to Mexico, seven to Hawaii and four to Bermuda, Iceland, and the Azores.

Many of the tours were financed by the girls themselves with money made from musicals, style shows, cake and pie sales and other benefits. Practically all the tours after 1956 were sponsored by the Entertainment Branch of the Dept. of Defense. They were the most frequently requested of all the performers who traveled with the Department of Defense's Professional Entertainment Branch. She led her group into numerous hospital wards all over the world where individual conversations with wounded, injured, or ill military personnel proved to be a bright spot for them and a personal privilege for group members.

Her influence has been felt by hundreds of Texas high-school and college-age Melody Maids and by thousands of military personnel around the world. Her talent and spirit represented by this group in their performances before civic organizations and in hospitals and military installations have brought significant goodwill to Texas.

Her leadership was characterized by a combination of kindness and emphasis on excellence. The standards she set for the group are many that we should set for ourselves today. Eloise stressed the value of service to our fellow human beings, the rewards of helping one another in group activities, and a respect for different cultures and religions.

Every August, women from all over the country head toward Beaumont. They come to spend a weekend reminiscing about their Melody Maid experiences, exchange family news, and mostly to be with Eloise and recognize her tireless work and passionate dedication to service and country.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to stand here tonight, representing such an amazing lady. Eloise Milam's commitment to her community and country is an inspiration to us all.

CONTINUING CRISIS IN FOSTER
CARE

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2002

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, in 1980 Congress made a commitment to improve the lives of abused and neglected children. However, lack of federal oversight and accountability has undercut that commitment. In fact, in far too many instances we have had devastating results. Of the estimated 2000 children annually who die of abuse and neglect, more than 40 percent were already known to child welfare agencies.

In Milwaukee, 48 percent of families investigated for abuse had prior involvement with the child welfare system; in Washington, DC, 32 percent of such families had been previously reported to protected services; and in New York City, in 43 percent of families that had been the subject of an abuse/maltreatment complaint, children were abused or maltreated again while under city supervision.

These sobering statistics are made worse when you consider that this state-sanctioned abuse and neglect occurs despite federally mandated procedural safeguards, including individualized case planning, case management and case reviews.

Federal law requires that children have a safe environment consistent with their special needs. Yet year after year, many states have consistently failed to meet even the basic needs of foster care children. This continued failure raises serious questions about the adequacy of federal oversight of state child welfare programs, which the federal government largely funds.

In yet another tragic example of our failure to provide for and protect foster children, a 9-year-old boy died of an asthma attack six weeks after being placed in foster care. According to the following article in the Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles county officials admit that social workers failed to inform medical workers of the child's severe asthma.

[From The Los Angeles Times, July 31, 2002]

TEARFUL APOLOGY IN BOY'S DEATH; COUNTY: A \$1-MILLION PAYOUT IS OKD. MOLINA, MOVED BY A MOTHER'S PLEA, VOWS ANSWERS IN FOSTER CARE CASE.

(By Garrett Therolf)

A mother's plea for a criminal investigation into the death of her son—whose life ended while he was in the Los Angeles County foster care system—Tuesday elicited a trembling and tearful apology from county Supervisor Gloria Molina, who pledged to demand answers from county officials about what happened.

Hours later, Molina and her colleagues approved a \$1-million settlement in the lawsuit brought over the boy's death.

Molina's remarks and the board action followed an emotional appeal by the boy's mother.

Debra Reid, 44, entered the hearing room grim-faced, flanked by eight family members dressed in black. At her side was her son Debin, who was placed in foster care for 15 months in 1997. His older brother, Jonathan, was taken away at the same time. The children were taken from their mother after social workers concluded that she was unstable and not tending properly to their medical needs.

But Jonathan died six weeks after being placed in foster care, where social workers, by the county's admission, failed to inform medical workers of his severe asthma. Reid has been fighting the county in the courts ever since.

"This is five years in coming," Reid began.

Racked with sobs, Reid recalled how she begged social workers to treat Jonathan's asthma. Social workers had dismissed Reid's account of the severity of the child's asthma, county officials acknowledged.

"They said my child was healthy," Reid told the board. "Well, that child now lies in an Inglewood cemetery."

None of the social workers has been disciplined in the case, county officials said. Reid begged supervisors to launch a criminal investigation, alleging that social workers had falsified reports to take the boy from her.

"We have sought true justice and we have not received it until someone sends this case for criminal investigation," Reid said. "All we have received is a payoff, and we're not satisfied with a payoff."

"Not one person from the county," Reid said, "has bothered to apologize."

Reid's appeal to the board is one of many that the supervisors have heard involving the foster care system.

Virtually every week, a parade of parents come before the supervisors, pleading for help in getting their children out of that system. Most weeks, they leave empty-handed, as supervisors insist that they cannot involve themselves in matters that are before the courts. The pleas often meet with indifference from county officials, who typically talk among themselves as parents address the supervisors.

Tuesday was different.

As Reid spoke, the hearing room went silent. Aides and department heads dabbed at tears. In an adjacent chamber where county administrators eat snacks and drink coffee, all movement ceased.

Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke asked Reid whether she was satisfied with the settlement. After conferring with her attorney, Reid said she was, but reiterated her call for justice.

Then Molina spoke, her voice trembling, her eyes watering.

She recalled how supervisors routinely rebuff requests for help in foster care cases, and how she had told a congresswoman