

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I was regrettably unable to cast votes on Tuesday, January 28 and Wednesday, January 29, 2004, as I was part of a congressional delegation visiting our troops in Iraq. Had I been present, I would have cast the following votes:

"Yes" on Roll Call No. 6, passage of H.R. 1385, authorizing the U.S. Postal Service to issue stamps supporting breast cancer research;

"Yes" on Roll Call No. 7, passage of H.R. 3493, the Medical Devices Technical Corrections Act;

"Yes" on Roll Call No. 8, the Baldwin substitute to S. 1920, regarding the extension of chapter 12 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code;

"Yes" on Roll Call No. 9, the motion to recommit S. 1920 with instructions;

"Yes" on Roll Call No. 10, final passage of S. 1920, regarding the extension of chapter 12 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code;

"No" on Roll Call No. 11, motion to instruct conferees on S. 1920, regarding the extension of chapter 12 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code.

## H.R. 3108—THE PENSION FUNDING EQUITY ACT

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge Congress to quit playing politics with the pensions of American workers. This country faces a pension funding crisis in desperate need of the temporary fix provided in the Pension Funding Equity Act. Both chambers of Congress passed H.R. 3108 overwhelmingly, and both the House and the Senate should work in the same bi-partisan fashion in conference to produce a bill that can quickly be sent to the President.

By no means should we simply ignore the partisanship and lack of good will that has permeated Congress in recent years and thwarted legislative progress. But we also shouldn't address that larger issue by holding hostage the pensions of hard working Americans.

All of us agree that the new rate for calculating pensions must ensure that they are adequately funded. But the fact of the matter is, we need a temporary fix now, both to protect our pensions and ensure that we don't act hastily in determining the final rate.

Mr. Speaker, our workers are relying on us to pass H.R. 3108 quickly. The temporary funding formula expired at the beginning of this year. And if we don't act now, by April 1, companies will be forced to add inflated amounts to their pension plans, a risky requirement that could force many companies into bankruptcy.

I would also encourage my colleagues on the conference committee to include Senate-passed language that addresses multi-employer plans. These plans are entered into through collective bargaining agreements between unrelated employers. Multi-employer

plans are crucial to employees of small businesses because the collaborative agreements allow small employers to provide defined benefit plans. These plans also provide employees with portable pensions as they move from job to job within the same industry.

The Senate language would provide the temporary relief that multi-employer plans need to address any funding problems and ensure that these important, flexible pension plans remain available to America's workers.

Now is the time to pass this pension legislation. We literally can't afford not to. The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. can't afford to take on additional pensions. American corporations can't afford to make inflated payments. And, most importantly, our American workers can't afford to lose their pensions.

Mr. Speaker, let's end the political games and pass this temporary fix to give us the time and flexibility we need to set a permanent replacement for the 30 year Treasury bond rate.

## PAYING TRIBUTE TO GREGORIO LAMBERT

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to pay respect to the passing of Gregorio Lambert, who died just four days after his 83rd birthday. Gregorio was a valued member of the Pueblo, Colorado community for close to 20 years. As his family mourns his loss, I think it is appropriate to pay tribute to the contributions Gregorio made to the veteran community of Colorado and his great service to this nation.

Gregorio Lambert grew up in Texas and served in the Army during World War II. Gregorio participated in the Normandy invasion and was held captive as a Prisoner of War in Germany for a year. After receiving an honorary discharge, he returned to Texas and married his wife of 57 years, Flora, later moving to Pueblo in 1985 to raise his family of three sons. Gregorio will be remembered as a valued member of the Pueblo Veterans Ritual Team, which provided assurance that our great veterans receive proper funeral arrangements. He helped put many hearts and minds at ease in the mourning of their loved ones. In addition to this gracious duty, Gregorio was a lifetime member of the San Isabel Chapter of the Disabled American Veterans and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Mr. Speaker, Gregorio Lambert was a well-respected member of his community, who unselfishly spent his time honoring his fellow veterans and their families. I am honored to take this time to pay tribute to this great patriot today and I would like to extend my thoughts and deepest sympathies to Gregorio's family and friends during this difficult time of bereavement.

CONGRATULATING THE HONORABLE OTHA LEE BIGGS ON RECEIPT OF THE DR. R.F. HENRY OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to honor the Honorable Otha Lee Biggs, Judge of Probate for Monroe County, Alabama, on the occasion of his being honored by the Coosa-Alabama River Improvement Association. For the past thirty years, he has served this organization with a high level of commitment and dedication to the success of waterways systems in the State of Alabama, traits that also extend to the service he has provided for the families which he has been elected to serve and represent.

Judge Biggs first joined CARIA in 1970, following his first election to the position of Judge of Probate and chairman of the Monroe County Commission. In the three decades since that time, he has made thirty-three consecutive annual trips to Washington, D.C., to meet with members of Alabama's congressional delegation to advocate for the interests of critical river projects and solicit funding for their completion. His tireless work on behalf of this organization has resulted in his being awarded CARIA's prestigious Dr. R.F. Henry Outstanding Service Award.

His tremendous work ethic and dedication have also been strongly evident in his commitment to economic development in his home county. Following his election in 1970, Judge Biggs immediately set about working to make Monroe County a shining example of growth in South Alabama. Through his efforts and work as both an elected official and unofficial ambassador for the residents of his area, Judge Biggs and the members of the county commission secured commitments from several large-scale corporations and businesses to build, relocate, or expand already existing facilities in Monroe County. Numbered among these are Alabama River Pulp, FDR Plastics, Stayfast, Inc., Vanity Fair Intimates, and B&B Cabinet Doors, LLC. As a result of his work and the work of everyone involved in the county's economic development program, Monroe County at one time led the entire State of Alabama in new job creation.

In addition to Monroe County's economic life, Judge Biggs has also been instrumental in helping that area preserve and promote its strong literary and historic heritage. As the birthplace and home of such internationally known writers as Nelle Harper Lee, Truman Capote, and Mark Childress, Monroe County has been firmly established as the "Literary Capital of Alabama," and Otha Lee Biggs has done tremendous work to ensure this reputation extends beyond county and state lines and reaches an international audience. In recent years, the number of tourists visiting the area has increased exponentially as a result of the significant amount of publicity, both nationally and globally, that the county has received. Additionally, he was instrumental in the creation of annual performances of the stage adaptation of Miss Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and his work on behalf of the county museum and theater troupe has resulted in the production securing permission to perform on stage

at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and at festivals in Great Britain and Israel.

Finally, he served for many years on the board of trustees for the University of South Alabama and fought tirelessly for the interests of the thousands of students, faculty members, and staff who have been involved in the life of that institution since its founding in the early 1960s.

Mr. Speaker, during my twenty years of work in the House of Representative, both as a staffer and now as the representative for Alabama's First Congressional District, I have met few public servants as committed and dedicated to the well-being of their community as Judge Otha Lee Biggs. With a tenacity and work ethic matched only by his kindness and generosity, he truly represents the finest example of both a southern gentleman and fine public servant. I have certainly learned a great deal from him during our many years of association, and have during that time been proud and deeply honored to develop a strong friendship with him. Monroe County and, indeed, all of South Alabama have benefited greatly from his experience and wisdom, and he has been a great friend to many people.

Along with his many friends and colleagues, not only in the Coosa-Alabama River Improvement Association but throughout the State of Alabama, I wish to extend to Judge Otha Lee Biggs my warmest congratulations on the receipt of the Dr. R.F. Henry Outstanding Service Award.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE RIFLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

#### HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise and pay tribute to the Rifle Area Chamber of Commerce in Rifle, Colorado. The Chamber recently celebrated 50 years of service to the City of Rifle, and it is my honor to call the attention of my colleagues and this nation to all that the Chamber does for the citizens of Rifle.

The Chamber has a strong tradition of excellent leadership and a dedicated staff. Since its inception, the Chamber has focused on the organization and health of Rifle's economy and its able and dedicated staff members always greet each citizen with a smile. In addition to its traditional activities, the Rifle Chamber of Commerce has always gone beyond the call of duty to be involved in the community. This anniversary celebration also marks a milestone for the only remaining charter member since 1954, John Scalzo. John's service to the chamber and to the city of Rifle has been much appreciated and invaluable, and I know the community is thankful for his service.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise and pay tribute to the Rifle Area Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber works tirelessly for the betterment of the city of Rifle and I am honored to pay tribute to its contributions today. Congratulations on your anniversary and keep up the hard work.

#### TRIBUTE TO PRIVATE FIRST CLASS LUIS A. MORENO

#### HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Private First Class Luis Moreno, a Dominican American who gave his life while serving our country in Iraq.

Pfc. Moreno, who was only 19 years old, was born in the Dominican Republic but immigrated to this country with his family in 1991 in search of a better life. Hoping one day to serve as a police officer, Pfc. Moreno made the courageous decision to dedicate his life to protecting the lives of others.

Pfc. Moreno enlisted in the Army shortly after graduating from Taft High School in the Bronx. He had been deployed in Baghdad for only three months with the Army's 1st Armored Division before his untimely death.

Mr. Speaker, I was inspired by this young man's courage and conviction and sadly reminded of the high cost of war. Pfc. Moreno, like so many other young soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. As we mourn the life of this brave soldier, let us remember the sacrifices of all our service members and work to ensure that their heroic deeds are never forgotten.

For his heroism and service to his country, I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the loss of Pfc. Luis Moreno.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this Chamber on January 21, 2004. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on roll call vote number 4.

I was also unavoidably absent from this Chamber on January 28, 2004. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on roll call numbers 8, 9 and 11. I would also like the record to show that I would have voted "no" on roll call number 10.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO HELEN HAVERSTRAW

#### HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to a truly remarkable woman who resides from my district, Helen Haverstraw. Helen resides in Bayfield, Colorado and has been an active member of her community and her church for many years. Helen is a gracious individual and inspires those around her and I am honored to praise her accomplishments today.

Helen celebrated her 100th birthday on December 12th. She was born in 1903 in West

Virginia on a farm during the Teddy Roosevelt era. The farm produced tomatoes, corn and other crops and her father would travel six miles to get into town to sell the fruits of his labor. Helen went on to become valedictorian of her high school. She married Ted Haverstraw in 1928 and they raised their daughters in West Virginia. Following a series of moves in the 1980's and early 90's, she returned to Colorado, where she continues to reside.

Mr. Speaker, Helen Haverstraw has lived a long and active life. She attributes her longevity to her abstaining from harmful products and a positive attitude. Helen's personality and willingness to help others have led her to the exceptional milestone she celebrates this year. Congratulations on your 100th birthday Helen, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, January 27, 2004, I was unavoidably absent due to inclement weather for roll call vote 6 on passage of H.R. 1385, and roll call vote 7 on passage of H.R. 3493. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on roll call votes 6 and 7.

Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, January 28, 2004, I was unavoidably absent due to inclement weather for roll call vote 8 on passage of the Baldwin amendment; roll call vote 9 on the Schakowsky motion to recommit; roll call vote 10 on final passage of S. 1920; and roll call vote 11 on the motion to instruct conferees. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on roll call votes 8, 9, 10, and 11.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO PEGGIE FORD

#### HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2004*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise and pay tribute to a remarkable woman from my district. Peggie Ford from Grand Junction, Colorado recently returned from a trip to Venezuela where she and a team of volunteers performed volunteer medical work for underprivileged children. Peggie's altruistic dedication to those less fortunate than herself is certainly deserving of recognition and it is my honor to call her acts to the attention of this body of Congress and our Nation here today.

Peggie is a surgery nurse with Saint Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction. She traveled to Venezuela as a member of a team of volunteers organized by Rotaplast International, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing medical help to underprivileged people throughout the world. This was Peggie's second trip to provide medical services to the needy. On the first, she traveled to Chile, where she assisted in numerous beneficial surgeries for those in need.