

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BESSLER

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mike Bessler, the Chief Publications Clerk with the Office of Official Reporters under the Clerk of the House.

Mike will be retiring on July 30 after 23 years of service to the House making sure our committee transcripts are accurate, properly bound and delivered on time. I am pleased to have this opportunity to commend one of my constituents for his outstanding service to this institution.

Originally from the Bronx, New York, Mike served a 4-year tour in the Air Force, stationed at Wright Patterson in Ohio and Shemya in the Aleutian Islands.

He was finally discharged from Andrews Air Force Base, and with his wife, Peggy decided to stay in the Washington, D. C. area, where he spent over a decade in the private sector before being hired by the Office of Official Reporters in January 1981. He has served in that office with distinction ever since.

Mike has spent his years working closely with the House committees to ensure their satisfaction with the transcripts. Through his dedicated supervision of the Publications Office, he has been the quintessential dedicated public servant.

Those who worked with him are privileged to have worked with an individual of Mike's level of professionalism.

Mike and Peggy are the proud parents of two daughters, Michelle and Kelly, and doting grandparents of Erica, Ezra and Zoe.

Mike looks forward to spending time with them and enjoying gardening, home projects, and devoting more time to a lifelong fascination with film and movies.

Thank you, Mike, for your many years of dedicated, professional service to the House and the country. Best wishes to you and Peggy in your retirement.

HONORING REV. DAVID JOHNSON AND MRS. TAWANA JOHNSON FOR THEIR WORK WITH THE STUDENTS OF THE BRONX, NEW YORK AND THE TRIP TO THE UNITED NATIONS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Reverend David M. Johnson and Mrs. Tawana Johnson for their strong community activism and commitment to today's youth. They have not only instilled pride into each and every child they have worked with, they have destroyed the notion that they are just

residents of America's inner-cities, but a valued citizen of the world.

On May 14, 2004, Mrs. Johnson, Founder of Virtuous Women Empower and God's Glory Interfaith Ministries where Rev. Johnson presides, organized and sponsored a trip to the United Nations for 100 of the most outstanding students from I.S. 117 Joseph H. Wade and C.E.S. 70 Max Schoenfeld School in the Bronx, New York. This meeting encouraged minority students that their representation in the international community is needed. This trip has engraved in the minds of these students a new understanding of diversity.

The students left a lasting impact on the United Nations with the intellect of their questions, and sincere concern for their community. After their visit the students were encouraged to return and many students were offered internships with the United Nations. Some of the students left striving to become diplomats, ambassadors, and Members of Congress.

Rev. and Mrs. Johnson have instilled a standard of excellence that all students should strive to follow. I share in our young people's dreams of democracy, equal opportunity and success. One day these students will assist in assuring these dreams come true for every citizen. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating them for their superior academic achievements, and their desire for social change.

The following Honor Roll students met with United Nations Ambassador Patrick Kennedy on May 14, 2004: Yariza Pimentel, Karina Hernandez, Narda Lopez, Zena Ahmed, Carol Prashad, Patricia Holman, Gisselle Francisco, Jatnna Medina, Jadderin Torres, Yereny Rodriguez, Gisell Acevedo, Jonathan Ruiz, Kamani Gujjar, Donnie Santana, Maite Amador, Eric Mayfield, Pilar Cruz, Eduardo Guerrero, Luiraldy Castillo, Kevin Delarosa, Jose Camacho, Ramon Cabral, Michelle Camarena, Lerubi Lopez, Luis Adames, Eduard Garcia, Betzaida Rodriguez, Denise Garcia, Albania Gonzalez, Edwin Albino, Marla Dominguez, Leonela Paula, Jessica Pena, Myrtle Richards, Kayla Williams, Yennifer Hernandez, Caroline Antigua, Devon Ferrer, Roshawn Ullah, Tasnim Majumder, Elias Rosario, Stephanie Pena, Tataria Burns, Paloma Carty, Erika Rosa, Verence Gomez, Tatiana Santiago, Angel Cardenas, Jose Aguilar, Omar Liriano, Leandro Pena, Richard Anim, Lisa Maldonado, Steven Diaz, Adalis Martinez, Gaby Perez, Stephany Veras, Claudia Avila, Evelyn Liriano, Marilyn Fernandez, Valeria Salazar, Omaira Tejada, Sebastian Gutierrez, Florangel Monegro, Sylvan Little, and HRU Rameses Amon Ra.

CONGRATULATING THE WRIGHTWOOD NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Wrightwood Neighbors Association (WNA), and its President Michael Lufano, on their ongoing commitment to enriching the lives of members of the Wrightwood community, on the occasion of the 21st annual "Taste of Lincoln Avenue."

The Wrightwood neighborhood—part of the Lincoln Park community—is located on Chicago's North side, bounded by Diversey Parkway on the north, Halsted Street on the east, Fullerton Avenue on the south, and Lakewood Avenue on the west.

Since 1962, the work of the WNA has been essential to the ongoing success of the Wrightwood community. The WNA strives to maintain a vibrant urban community for people to live, shop, play, and raise families. The Association has helped Wrightwood preserve its historic and cultural treasures, while also encouraging architectural development to add beauty and rejuvenation to the neighborhood. With this combination, lifelong Wrightwood residents are able to remain, as new generations bring their own flavor to the area.

The vision of the WNA has given Wrightwood the ability to continuously emerge as an area with a strong sense of community, diversity, and heritage. The WNA's committees have enhanced the schools, maintained and improved local parks, and reviewed land development to guarantee the character of the community.

Known as the "Granddaddy of Chicago street festivals," the "Taste of Lincoln Avenue" provides Wrightwood neighbors the opportunity to enjoy the summer and spend time with friends. With food, craft vendors, live music, and other entertainment, it is an occasion for Chicagoans to sample the diversity of this great neighborhood.

Since its beginnings in 1984, the "The Taste of Lincoln Avenue" has raised over \$1 million, and last year alone, over \$135,000, in order to improve schools and parks, aid non-profit organizations, and increase the beauty of the community. The WNA's "Taste of Lincoln Avenue" celebrates the history of Wrightwood and ensures the community's continuous improvement in the future.

It goes without saying that the enthusiasm, hard work, and leadership of Michael Lufano, organization officers Jeff Kwiat, Stacey Hawk, Anne Durkin, and Chris Connors, and the other members of the WNA have brought a secure and lasting vision to Chicago's North side. I thank them for the enthusiasm in making the Wrightwood neighborhood one of the jewels of Chicago.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of the Fifth Congressional District of Illinois, and indeed all of Chicago, I am privileged to congratulate the Wrightwood Neighbors Association on continuing to enhance the quality of life in Chicago, and wish them tremendous success with the upcoming "Taste of Lincoln Avenue."

**MINOR USE AND MINOR SPECIES
ANIMAL HEALTH ACT OF 2004**

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 2004

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 741, the Minor Use and Minor Species Animal Health Act. This legislation contains provisions that will better the lives and ease some of the frustrations for the more than 7 million Americans that suffer from food allergies every day.

I have had the unfortunate experience to learn more about the trials and tribulations of food allergen sufferers when one of the members of my staff, Christy Farmer, was diagnosed with Celiac Disease earlier this year. Celiac Disease is an immune-mediated disease that causes damage to the gastrointestinal tract and is triggered by the consumption of gluten. Gluten is the protein part of wheat, rye, barley, oats, and other related grains, which are found in many of the foods that people eat on a day to day basis. The only treatment for Celiac Disease is adherence to a strict life long gluten-free diet. In order to comply with this, individuals must carefully read all food labels—which can often be inaccurate and extremely confusing. Many times, food products may contain a derivative of a known food allergen, however the food label does not make that clear. This can lead to people unknowingly consuming exactly what they have been trying so hard to avoid. This painstaking process of carefully examining every food label and determining the exact ingredient of each product can be extremely frustrating and difficult for individuals.

This legislation will help tremendously in taking some of the guesswork out of reading food labels. Manufacturers in the food industry must now include the commonly accepted names of the eight most common allergens—milk, eggs, fish, crustacea, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, and soybeans. Food allergen sufferers will now be able to scan food labels with greater ease and many incidents of accidental ingestion can be avoided.

Having a food allergy, especially to something that is found in so many different foods, can add a level of complication to a person's life that can be difficult to imagine. Christy was required to undergo a total lifestyle change due to her gluten sensitivity. Spontaneously stopping at a restaurant for dinner is no longer possible, traveling not knowing in advance what foods will be available is no longer an option, and giving up your favorite foods is not as easy as it sounds.

I am pleased that this legislation will help ease some of the frustrations and make adhering to an allergy-free diet a little easier for the millions of Americans that suffer from food allergies. I strongly urge my colleagues in joining me to support S. 741.

**THE ALASKA AIDS ASSISTANCE
ASSOCIATION IN ANCHORAGE**

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, last week at the 15th International AIDS Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, the world's attention was drawn to the 38 million people around the world who are living with HIV—nearly a million of whom live in the United States.

Moreover, many HIV positive individuals in the United States face significant hurdles that prevent them from engaging in long-term health care, including unstable financial and housing situations and a lack of trust between patients and health care providers. As a result, approximately 250,000 individuals who are aware of their HIV status are not receiving regular primary medical care; a population the Health Resources and Services Administration defines as the "unmet need" in the domestic epidemic. However, the United States should not and must not consider this lack of HIV health care inevitable because solutions do exist.

With this in mind, I rise today to recognize and share with you work that is being done in my own state of Alaska to successfully bring HIV treatment and care to the people who need it. The Alaska AIDS Assistance Association in Anchorage uses "Inter-Agency Networking" to connect HIV positive Alaskans to a system of integrated health care and support. The activity accomplishes this by providing health care agencies with opportunities to exchange information and share resources, thus increasing the agencies understanding of community needs and enhancing their ability to provide care to more people living with HIV.

Inter-Agency Networking is indebted to a capacity-building initiative called Connecting to Care, which was developed by AIDS Action in collaboration with the Health Resource and Service Administration. Connecting to Care identified the Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association's activity as a "model practice" and disseminated it to more than 10,000 health providers throughout the country as a model intervention that has been successful in connecting HIV positive individuals to care. My hope is that the Connecting to Care initiative will guide other communities in their own development of activities that connect HIV positive individuals with the health care they want and need.

**PROTECTING RAILROAD OPERATORS,
TRAVELERS, EMPLOYEES,
AND COMMUNITIES WITH TRANSPORTATION
SECURITY ACT OF 2004**

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleagues Congressman JAMES OBERSTAR, the Ranking Member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and Congresswoman CORRIE BROWN, Ranking Demo-

cratic Member of the Railroad Subcommittee, are introducing the "Protecting Railroad Operators, Travelers, Employees, and Communities with Transportation Security Act of 2004" (PROTECTS Act).

Since the September 11 terrorist attacks, the government has authorized over \$12 billion on aviation security. Railroad and transit agencies were authorized to receive \$65 million in security grants in 2003 and \$50 million in 2004. Clearly, this disparity in security funding is unacceptable. We cannot afford to put a price tag on safety. We cannot leave our railroads vulnerable to attack. Nearly five times as many people take trains as planes every day. Our bill authorizes nearly \$1.3 billion to protect passenger and freight railroads and the communities they serve.

I have grave concerns regarding the vulnerability of our national rail and transit systems. A documented one-third of all terrorist attacks worldwide have targeted railroads and other surface transportation systems. The United States rail network touches every major urban center and hundreds of smaller communities in between. Millions of tons of hazardous materials are shipped yearly across the United States. A large portion of these shipments is transported by rail, sometimes through densely populated areas, increasing the concern that attacks or accidents on these shipments could have severe consequences. Additionally, the 3,000 to 3,300 railroad shipments of spent nuclear fuel from 39 states that the Department of Energy plans to deposit in Yucca Mountain over the next 24 years, highlights the need for stringent rail security to guard against such incidents.

Based on recent numerous rail attacks around the world, terrorists seem to have expressed a proclivity for attacking rail systems. Between 1998 and 2003, there were 181 attacks on trains and related targets such as depots, ticket stations and rail bridges worldwide. Lack of screening and inadequate safeguards in the transportation of explosives, chemical, biological and radiological agents have created major vulnerabilities in our rail transportation system. These vulnerabilities are all largely un-addressed.

The challenge of protecting our railroads is a daunting one. The demands on our system to deliver travelers and freight safely, quickly, and efficiently make our task all the more difficult. However, these goals are achievable. Failure on this mission is not an option.

The PROTECTS Act authorizes over \$1 billion to help secure our national rail system against terrorist threats. \$500 million is authorized for grants to wholly or partially reimburse State and local governments, railroad carriers and rail labor for the development and implementation of increased security measures.

The tragic terrorist attack on a commuter train system in Madrid earlier this year was a urgent reminder of our need to implement safety measures to secure our national rail transportation system. Washington's Union Station, and New York's Penn Station, both have very high volumes of pedestrian traffic that include a mix of Amtrak travelers and daily commuters. Inadequate security measures put these travelers at risk. Our bill authorizes \$597 million for Amtrak to address fire and safety issues in tunnels in New York, NY, Baltimore, MD, and Washington, DC. In addition, \$65 million is authorized for Amtrak system-wide security upgrades.