

We in Congress continue to pray for all affected by the horrible events of three years ago and will continue to be vigilant on the war on terror. May God bless all the families and their loved ones, and may God bless America.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SERVICE OF ANN JEMISON

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Representative JOHN CONYERS and myself, I wish to extend our thanks and gratitude to Ann Jemison, who is retiring this week after almost 30 years of service to the House of Representatives. We also wish to extend our very best wishes to Ann, on her upcoming wedding on September 25, 2004.

Ann hails from the Land of Lincoln and began her career on the Hill as an Assistant Manager and then Manager in the House Restaurant System from 1975 through 1994. She moved into the position of Staff Assistant/Receptionist, first, for the Committee on Public Works and Transportation in 1994, and then with the Committee on the Judiciary Committee in 1995.

Ann is the first smiling face you see when you enter the Committee's front door and the friendly and knowledgeable voice you hear when you call our office.

Mr. Speaker, Ann has served the House Judiciary Committee, the Congress and the American people over all these years with commitment, dedication and integrity. We thank her and want her to know that she will be missed.

JOBS ACTION TEAM'S COMPETITIVENESS AGENDA

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, the focus of the Jobs Action Team's "Competitiveness Agenda" this week is ending lawsuit abuse, and with good reason. The United States is the lawsuit capital of the world, and this puts American companies at a competitive disadvantage.

F frivolous lawsuits are costing American businesses \$129 billion each year. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce found the greatest impact is on small businesses—which contribute three-fourths of all new jobs, which face additional costs of \$17,000 each year. This is unacceptable.

The House of Representatives has responded by passing numerous legal reform bills. H.R. 4571, introduced by Representative LAMAR SMITH, passed the House yesterday. This bill provides for appropriate sanctions against those who file junk lawsuits. The Senate must act now.

Americans should not have to fear life-ruining lawsuits. This should not be a country where individuals can file cases to get money wherever they can—many with no intention of going to court. Let's end lawsuit abuse now.

LIABILITY COSTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

FAST FACTS

"America's small businesses are the driving force behind our economic achievements, and the U.S. Chamber is proud to support and represent this country's small business owners."—Thomas J. Donohue, president and CEO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

The total annual cost of the tort system to U.S. businesses (large and small) is \$129 billion.

Small businesses with \$10 million or less in annual revenue bear 68 percent of that cost, paying \$88 billion a year.

Very small businesses (\$1 million or less in annual revenue) bear 26 percent of the business cost, paying \$33 billion a year.

A small business with \$10 million annual revenue pays about \$150,000 a year in tort liability costs—money that could be used to hire additional employees.

A small business with \$1 million annual revenue pays about \$17,000 a year in tort liability costs—money that could be used to expand or improve health benefits for employees.

Very small businesses (\$1 million or less in annual revenue) pay 44 percent of their tort liability costs (\$15 billion) out-of-pocket, as opposed to through insurance.

There are over 4.5 million U.S. small businesses with \$10 million or less in annual revenue.

There are about 3.8 million U.S. small businesses with \$1 million or less in annual revenue.

Small businesses contribute approximately three-quarters of all new jobs added to the economy.

The Liability Costs for Small Business study was conducted for the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform by NERA Economic Consulting.

HONORING THE NATIONAL GUARD'S SERVICE IN WINNING THE WAR ON TERROR

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday President George W. Bush praised the valor of guardsmen and reservists fighting to win the War on Terror. President Bush is the 19th former guardsman to be president and he rightly pointed out that the National Guard is America's oldest fighting force. The Guard has played a vital role in all of our major conflicts, and especially in recent decades fighting in Vietnam, the Gulf War, and the War on Terror.

The Guard is also called on in times of national emergency to provide invaluable support to local authorities. After the attacks of September 11th, thousands of Guardsmen across the country voluntarily stepped forward to help. When hurricanes strike our shores, it is the Guard that provides necessary communications and rescue services.

As a proud 31-year veteran of the South Carolina Army National Guard, with two sons in the Guard one of whom is serving in Iraq, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in thanking all of the men and women serving in the Guard and Reserves today for protecting American families in the War on Terror.

In conclusion, may God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11th.

IN HONOR OF MISS IDAHO 2004

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 2004 Miss Idaho, Elizabeth Margaret Barchas of Boise. Elizabeth will be proudly representing the Gem State in this weekend's Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, NJ.

Elizabeth received her bachelor's degree from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. She then studied abroad and received her master's degree from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and was a Fulbright Scholar. She has been accepted to Harvard Law school; however, she has deferred her matriculation for one year to pursue her duties as Miss Idaho. Elizabeth's platform is understanding individuals with disabilities, and I am very proud of her continued commitment of community service for Idaho and across the globe.

I am confident that Elizabeth will do an outstanding job in representing Idaho, as I am pulling for her to be crowned the next Miss America. I wish Elizabeth, and the entire Barchas family all the best for this weekend's pageant.

INTRODUCTION OF H.J. RES. 104

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I have just introduced the House counterpart to Senator HATCH's constitutional amendment (S.J. Res. 15) allowing those who have been citizens of the United States for at least 20 years to serve as President and Vice President.

We all agree that constitutional amendments should not be taken lightly and should only be considered when the betterment of this country is in question. It is my strong belief that "betterment" is what would be achieved if such an amendment is adopted.

The reasons the founding fathers added this clause to the constitution are archaic at best. The main rationale was to protect the U.S. from undue foreign influence from the election of a foreign leader in the executive office. This mindset prevailed not long after the founders freed the country from the control of a foreign body. Interestingly, however, in what is called "the Hamilton loophole," they exempted their own generation from the burdens of the "natural born" requirement. Seven of the 39 signers of the Constitution in Philadelphia in 1787 were foreign born, as well as 8 of America's original 81 Senators and Representatives, 3 of our first 10 Supreme Court justices, 4 of our first 6 secretaries of the treasury, and one of our first 3 secretaries of war. Most, if not all, of these immigrants were eligible to serve as president, since the constitution exempted all those who were citizens at the time the constitution was adopted from the "natural born" requirement.

Today, the offices of President and Vice President are the only offices where a person who is not U.S. born is disqualified from serving. Is this still appropriate when we have

seen great leaders, after a lifetime of service to this country, be unable to represent the citizens of this country?

Today we have many significant political leaders who cannot be president simply because they were not born here. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is the most famous example, but what about Michigan's Governor, Jennifer Granholm, who came to the United States from Canada at the age of four? Or Congressman Pete Hoekstra, who came to this country when he was a mere three years old and has been given the responsibility of being Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence? Congressman Hoekstra oversees the intelligence community in a post-9/11 United States and yet regardless of his lifetime of service, he cannot be President.

I hope my colleagues will agree with me that it is long past time for the "natural born" requirement to change. Respect for the many legal immigrants who have made our country great should lead us to conclude that once they have been U.S. citizens for 20 years they should no longer be constitutionally disqualified from serving in our nation's highest offices.

H.J. RES. 104

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission for ratification:

"ARTICLE—

"A person who is a citizen of the United States, who has been a citizen of the United States for at least 20 years, and who is otherwise eligible to hold the Office of the President, is not ineligible to hold that Office by reason of not being a native born citizen of the United States."

RECOGNIZING PAST AND PRESENT MEMBERS OF FERNALD FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the current and former members of the Fernald Fire Department for their distinguished service in protecting the former nuclear site and the surrounding community for the past 50 years.

Fernald was a major hub in America's nuclear weapons complex during the Cold War. Located about 25 miles north of Cincinnati, in Crosby Township, the site's primary charge was to produce metal uranium—an important and potentially dangerous job demanding skill and courage. The firefighters serving at Fernald share these same admirable qualities.

For the last half-century, the department's men and women—professionals and volunteers—have provided outstanding emergency response service to the Fernald site and the residents of Crosby Township. The department responds to hundreds of medical emergencies and house-fires every year—they made about 300 runs last year alone.

Mr. Speaker, firefighters, like the men and women of the Fernald Fire Department, have always played an important role in keeping Americans safe. That role has never been more vital or deserving of our admiration and respect than in the post-September 11 world. Whether in New York City or a rural community in southwestern Ohio the sacrifice and bravery of America's firefighters is on display every day—running toward the smoke and flames. Saving lives.

Later this year, the Fernald Fire Department will close its doors one last time after a job well done. They will leave behind their equipment and their service to a grateful community.

I want to thank the past and present members of the Fernald Fire Department for their dedication and sacrifice in making Fernald and Crosby Township safer places to live and work.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF AGUDAS ACHIM CONGREGATION

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this opportunity to congratulate a congregation in my district celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. Agudas Achim Congregation in Alexandria, Virginia has been a fixture in Northern Virginia as a place of worship and a vibrant community. In conjunction with their 90th anniversary, the men and women of Agudas Achim are taking the opportunity to honor the military veterans who are part of their congregation and its extended family.

Since the Revolutionary War, Jewish servicemen and women have served our nation proudly. Whether they served as members of the infantry, pilots, doctors, nurses or chaplains, Jewish soldiers have proudly defended democracy throughout the world while protecting the freedoms of all Americans. Today they continue to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan to bring stability and hope to the people and region. Throughout the years, Jewish Americans have fought with great honor and distinction.

Responding to the call for service, Jewish Americans have served in the military in greater percentages than their percent of the population. They have shown great dedication and love for their nation and the rights that are within it. They recognize that freedoms, such as the freedom of religion, are not universal values granted to every person. Many of our ancestors, especially those of Jewish Americans, came to this country to escape religious tyranny. Today, this same drive that brought us together, helps us fight to gain these same freedoms for people throughout the world.

We remember those who fearlessly paid the ultimate price in defending the United States during times of war, and recall the sacrifice made by those who bravely fought and returned home. We also keep in our thoughts those who continue to serve our nation proudly in Iraq and Afghanistan. Together these men and women have helped preserve the freedoms that we cherish. While many have not made it home, I am certain there is com-

fort in knowing they perished fighting for their beliefs and for the protection of their families and friends back home.

I would like to thank all those Jewish men and women and their families who have served our nation. Their courage has helped preserve basic human rights for people throughout the world. I also thank Agudas Achim Congregation for paying tribute to these veterans, and bringing attention to their selflessness in defense of freedom. Agudas Achim has been at the forefront of defending these freedoms and, in doing so, has made Northern Virginia a better place to live.

TED VELEZ: REMEMBERING A HERO OF EL BARRIO

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay homage to the late Ted Velez of East Harlem, one of New York's finest sons who passed away August 6th 2004. He was a community leader whose tremendous achievements will continue to better the lives of the residents of East Harlem long into the future. Mr. Velez had a vision of New York City that saw equality across the board and included fair and affordable housing for all New Yorkers, regardless of color or social standing.

Working in El Barrio as a young social worker, Mr. Velez helped found the East Harlem Tenants Council in 1962, which boasted a network of progressive building captains who monitored building safety and overall residential well being. Two years later he championed a series of rent strikes on East 123rd Street, effectively forcing landlords to make necessary repairs in East Harlem residential buildings.

In the summer of 1971, after trudging for more than six years through city, state and federal bureaucracy; Mr. Velez won federal approval to transform the entire city block between 122nd and 123rd Streets. The project was funded with \$42 million dollars allotted from the Department of Housing and Urban Development Department, the largest allocation up to that time for a single community project. Mr. Velez's efforts resulted in comfortable, affordable housing for 656 low to moderate-income families in what is now known as the Taino Towers, giving East Harlem residents opportunities that many had believed to be impossible.

Throughout his accomplished life Mr. Velez strived at the forefront of progressive social change as a political activist, yet was able to work productively within the political mainstream with leaders of both political parties. He marched in civil rights demonstrations with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the South, where he helped to organize voter registration drives. In his twenties, he supported Senator Bobby Kennedy and also worked closely with Mayor John V. Lindsay's administration. He was a close associate of former Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton and Basil Paterson, two of New York's most influential Democratic leaders.

Born in Puerto Rico on December 29th 1938, Mr. Velez moved to East Harlem at the age of six. Working on behalf of the most needy, he managed to achieve the status of a