

BAT FOR THE CURE

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2004

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, each year, about 33,000 Americans die from prostate cancer and 256,000 are diagnosed for the first time. Aside from lung cancer, the disease kills more men than any other form of cancer.

On November 8, 1999, Ed Rendell, one of the country's foremost baseball authorities, was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Early detection and the care of doctors like Nicholas Romas at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York City saved Ed's life.

In late 2002, Ed founded Bat for the Cure, a non-profit charity dedicated to the eradication of prostate cancer. With its prominent Board of Directors, including Bob Costas, Mario Cuomo, Len Elmore, Kathy Giusti and John Hennessy III, the charity has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to fight the disease.

The organization has also enlisted well-known sports stars who are joining in the fight, such as Dustin Baker, Frank Robinson, Tom McCraw, Bob Watson, Don Baylor, Dave Winfield, and Rafael Palmeiro. Many of these celebrities have personal experiences with the tragedy of cancer.

Fortunately, prostate cancer is one of the slowest growing cancers, so proper detection and treatment can save lives. With Bat for the Cure's support, St. Luke's-Roosevelt, the hospital that saved Ed Rendell's life, is now helping many other cancer patients become survivors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to make prostate cancer research and early detection a national health care priority. Congress should act without delay to double prostate cancer research funding at the National Institute of Health, fully fund the National Cancer Institute, and save prostate cancer research at the Veterans' Administration.

STATE OF THE AFRICAN
AMERICAN MALE**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the State of the African American Male conference, a national initiative of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation to focus our Nation's attention on solutions to the escalating crisis in the Black community.

This past Friday, December 3, I hosted this national initiative in Oakland. Included were a visit to a prison college program, free health screenings at the conference and concurrent solutions-focused workshops. It was attended by nearly 400 people, more than 60 of whom were formerly incarcerated individuals.

The focus of the Oakland conference was on solutions for formerly incarcerated individuals and the challenges that prevent them from smoothly re-entering our communities. The Oakland Police Department reports that some 80 percent of the 114 homicides com-

mitted in Oakland in 2003 involved people on parole or probation. For that reason, I felt compelled to focus the conference in my district on the steps that we as a community and as Members of Congress can take to begin to reverse this alarming trend.

The Oakland Conference was an important opportunity for us to examine closely what were the factors associated with the failure of our corrections system. I wanted to look at the needs and solutions for successful re-entry to our communities.

On the morning before the afternoon conference, I invited my distinguished colleague from the Judiciary Committee, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, and members of the clergy to join me for a visit to San Quentin College. Offering an Associate of Arts degree, the college program at San Quentin prison is the only on-site, degree-granting college program in the entire California corrections system. It is one of only a few in the United States. It is an extension site of Patten University in Oakland, California. The curriculum at San Quentin includes courses such as American Government, literature, ethics and communication.

Without the warden and without other prison officials present, we spent nearly an hour listening carefully to five prisoners who are serving sentences of various lengths. These gentlemen described the rewards of getting a college education while serving their sentences. Even a prisoner serving a life sentence described the positive influence it has had on his life and that he encourages other prisoners to get an education. Another prisoner told us how his bond with his school-age daughter was strengthened by their sharing each other's homework. He talked of the pride he felt at being able to help her with her math for the first time. Yet, these prisoners reported that it is often difficult to maintain the motivation to make major life changes when it takes nearly two weeks for them to receive their mail from loved ones, and costs them \$15 for a ten-minute telephone call.

When family and community ties are so essential to a successful transition, then why do we permit such barriers to be erected between prisoners and the people who care most about them?

The difficulties these prisoners face during the re-entry process are further exacerbated by the fact that since 1994, Pell grants have been denied to individuals who are incarcerated. Why do we permit such barriers to remain when it is clear that education and job training are essential to a successful transition to our communities?

These funding cuts are part of a broader trend that began in 1977, when the California Department of Corrections eliminated rehabilitation from its mission and since then its mission has been solely to punish. When I was in the California Assembly, my colleagues and I attempted to correct this, but were prevented by a prevailing, but ill-informed "tough on crime" ideology. It is outrageous and immoral and in my district in the City of Oakland, we saw the consequences in 2003 in the 114 homicides.

Cost benefit analyses demonstrating the value of college over prisons are well known and well documented. When it is clear that college is better than prison, why do we continue to incarcerate more black males than we educate?

At the Oakland conference, education was just one area of the re-entry process that we

examined. In addition, health screenings were provided in the areas of HIV, prostate cancer, hypertension, diabetes and cholesterol, and all tests were free and open to the public. Provided by National Black Nurses Association, Kaiser Permanente, the Ethnic Health Institute and California Prevention and Education Project this component of the program addressed basic health concerns of Black men.

Congressman DANNY DAVIS, who began the State of the African American Male initiative, joined Congresswoman JACKSON-LEE and me for the Conference. Solutions Conferences have been held around the United States in order to create a clearinghouse of best practices. In the Oakland Conference in my district, Topics for the concurrent Solutions Workshops included: Re-Entry Programs; Record Expungement; Sentencing Alternatives; Employment and Training; Health; Housing; Education; and Funding Sources. When the workshop moderators reported out their solutions, it was abundantly clear that the expertise and assistance and innovative programs exist.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to announce at the Oakland Conference that one Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Scholarship per year in my district will be designated for a formerly incarcerated person. I was also proud to announce that a second event will be held on Saturday, January 22, 2005 where I will bring together 60 attorneys from the Charles Houston Bar Association and the San Francisco Bar Association to provide record expungement assistance to formerly incarcerated individuals. This will be an opportunity for several hundred people to get a clean slate.

What is needed, Mr. Speaker is for such programs to become a national priority.

Rather than setting up people in the correction system for failure by offering them little means of turning their lives around, we must restore Pell grants to incarcerated individuals. One of the programs in Oakland—Project Choice—provides support services to prisoners before they get out and stays with them. But Project Choice only has funding to support 40 of the 3,000 people paroled each year to Oakland.

Without programs like San Quentin College, Project Choice and others, without the support of their families and communities, these prisoners will return to the life that led them to prison in the first place. As a nation, we must provide alternatives. This is not only a matter of public safety, but is truly our moral responsibility. It is our obligation as members of the human race.

HONORING HERITAGE ELEMEN-
TARY SCHOOL STUDENTS,
THOMPSON'S STATION, TEN-
NESSEE**HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2004

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, Tennessee is known as the "Volunteer State" because we have a proud tradition of giving back to our community and our country. Today the students at Heritage Elementary School in Thompson's Station, Tennessee are reaffirming our state's reputation for volunteerism by working to support America's military families.

Our men and women in uniform have sacrificed for our security, and their families bear a burden each and every day. The students at Heritage Elementary have made it their mission to give all they can to Operation Stork Support, a program that presents gift baskets to expectant mothers in the Fort Campbell community. These moms-to-be are separated from their loved ones by war, but we can help lessen their burden and show them how much we care. The Heritage Elementary students have raised \$740 in pennies—that's 74,000 pennies—for Operation Stork Support. I thank them for their contribution, their concern, and not least, their love for our military families.

UNDERSTANDING ISLAM AND DEFENDING FREEDOM—LIFT THE DE FACTO GAG ORDER ON NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE SHIRIN EBADI

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2004

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, it was religious freedom that brought the Pilgrims to America's shores. In our beloved Constitution and Bill of Rights, we affirm our steadfast commitment to freedom of expression and freedom of the press as pillars of our democracy. Consequently, it pains and embarrasses me, as an American that the executive branch of our government continues to betray our democratic values and preclude Ms. Shirin Ebadi, the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and other distinguished Muslims from publishing their views for all Americans to read.

Ms. Shirin Ebadi is the first Iranian and the first Muslim woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. She is a distinguished lawyer, scholar, and teacher. President Bush has praised her tireless work as a champion of democracy and human rights. She represents Reformed Islam, and argues for an interpretation of Islamic law which promotes international respect for universal human rights. She is devoted to religious freedom, even to the extent of risking her own life, for example, to defend the rights of other faiths inside Iran. In short, she personifies precisely the type of Islamic voice of faith and scholarship with whom our nation should be in dialogue.

Why then is our government, through self-defeating U.S. Treasury Department Regulations, imposing a gag order on Ms. Ebadi? Why are Americans who attempt to help Ms. Ebadi publish her writings now being threatened with severe fines and lengthy prison sentences?

The current over-reaching Treasury Department regulations are demonstrably short-sighted, counterproductive, and unrepresentative of American ideals. That is why I have written to President Bush urging him to reverse to reverse this policy and demonstrate anew America's commitment to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the free flow of ideas. I ask unanimous consent that my self-explanatory letter be reprinted in its entirety at the conclusion of my statement. The intent of the regulations, I presume, is to prevent giving beneficial trade revenue to governments that support terrorism, but preventing the publication of ideas is a clumsy, foolish way to try to protect Americans.

Ms. Ebadi's views are the antithesis of those of Osama bin Laden. She is in the same tradition as Solzhenitsen, Sakharov, Sharansky, Walesa, and Havel—all of whom risked their lives to condemn Soviet repression, thus helping give hope to their oppressed countrymen and women and end the Cold War. America should extend Ms. Ebadi and others like her the same support. That would be in keeping with the democratic values and ideals of the American people that have been championed by Democratic and Republican Presidents alike since from the founding of our republic until recent years.

Instead, unbeknownst to many Americans, the Bush Administration continues to enforce unreasonable regulations that silence Ms. Ebadi's voice in America just as effectively as if the Iranian mullahs imprisoned and silenced her, as they have on numerous occasions in the past.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

November 24, 2004.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,

President of the United States, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am writing to urge you to take immediate corrective action to defend America's commitment to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the free flow of ideas. Specifically, I ask you to overturn existing trade-related regulations of the U.S. Treasury Department and substitute new regulations that will allow Ms. Shirin Ebadi from Iran to be heard and published as widely as possible in the U.S. and abroad. More generally, the regulations should be changed to allow public speech and communications around the world.

Ms. Ebadi, a distinguished Muslim jurist, lawyer, scholar, and teacher, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003. You have praised her tireless work as a champion of democracy and human rights. She represents Reformed Islam, and argues for an interpretation of Islamic law which promotes international respect for universal human rights. She is devoted to religious freedom, even to the extent of risking her own life, for example, to defend the rights of the Ba'hai community in Iran. In short, she personifies precisely the type of Islamic voice of faith and scholarship with whom our nation should be in dialogue.

Yet, Ms. Ebadi is now prohibited by U.S. Treasury Department regulations from writing and working with American editors to publish her memoirs in the U.S. These regulations are counterproductive for multiple reasons:

They silence Islamic proponents of freedom, democratic reform, tolerance, and universal human rights.

They prohibit Americans from contracting or collaborating with Ms. Ebadi and authors from other restricted countries to create or revise new books for Americans to read, or pay them in advance.

They prohibit American editors, publishers, and agents from working professionally on new or existing books with Ms. Ebadi and other distinguished authors in restricted countries.

Under threat of severe fines and lengthy prison sentences, they prohibit American publishers, editors, and agents from marketing or promoting Ms. Ebadi's writing and those of other pro-democracy authors from restricted countries in the Islamic world and elsewhere.

The practical consequence of these regulations is that American publishers simply cannot do business with Ms. Ebadi and other authors like her and cannot publish their books. Furthermore, Americans who want to

receive more information and learn more about society and culture in Iran, Sudan, and Cuba are limited now to reading what has already been written in such restricted countries. These regulations of the U.S. Government silence Ms. Ebadi's voice in America just as effectively as if the Iranian mullahs imprisoned and silenced her, as they have on numerous occasions in the past.

This policy and the underlying Treasury Department regulations are demonstrably shortsighted, counterproductive, and unrepresentative of American ideals. They urgently need to be replaced by less restrictive and proscriptive regulations that are reflective of American values and democratic traditions and that are consistent with the spirit and letter of the laws enacted by Congress in 1988 and further clarified in 1992 to ensure the free flow of information and ideas in international trade. The revised regulations clearly should enable Americans to contract, pay in advance, and work freely with Ms. Ebadi on revisions of her existing work and the creation of additional writings and to market and promote her writings without constraints.

Mr. President, you have the authority and power to rectify this betrayal of America's commitment to freedom of speech, press and religion. It is also noteworthy that the bipartisan 9/11 Commission has warned that if the U.S. does not act aggressively to define itself in the Islamic world (including the encouragement of more open societies), the Islamic extremists will gladly do the job for us. Accordingly, the 9/11 Commissioners recommend, in relation to the war on terrorism, that the U.S. Government use non-military means in addition to force to define anew what we stand for, and to lead by example in promoting freedom, democracy, and respect for universal human rights.

I can think of no clearer or easier example for America to set than for you to take whatever action is necessary, as a matter of urgency, to enable Ms. Ebadi to publish her writings in America.

Sincerely yours,

RUSH HOLT,
Member of Congress.

DIRECTING CLERK OF THE HOUSE TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS IN ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 4818

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 6, 2004

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday's vote on H. Con. Res. 528 is about much more than just eliminating a provision that Republicans sneaked into the Omnibus Appropriations bill. While that provision would have eroded existing privacy protections of American taxpayers, today's vote also highlights the growing abuse of legislative power and abuse of the public trust by the Republican leadership. It is also about priorities and meeting our nation's needs.

I opposed the massive spending bill when it was considered on the House floor on November 20, 2004, because I was certain that, without carefully examining it, I might be voting for inappropriate, irresponsible, or even embarrassing provisions. Sure enough, that is the case. The provision the Republicans inserted into the spending bill which would allow Members and staff on Congressional committees to