

827 (Identification Documents for Domestic Violence and Crime Victims)—None.

828 (Rulemaking)—900.

831, 832, 833, 834, Subtitle D, International Marriage Broker Regulation—916, 922.

BORDER PROTECTION, ANTI-TERRORISM, AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4437) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to strengthen enforcement of the immigration laws, to enhance border security, and for other purposes:

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer my views on H.R. 4437 and this important issue. As a member of the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security, I have worked actively with both Republicans and Democrats to strengthen our Nation's laws to protect the American people. Many of the provisions of this bill are under the jurisdiction of the Homeland Security committee, although this version differs substantially from the Committee's product.

The debate on immigration reform is an important matter for this country. Last year, I voted to pass the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Implementation Act, which authorized an additional 10,000 Border Patrol agents and 4,000 additional Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers. Unfortunately, the Bush administration's budget funds only 210 additional border agents and 80 ICE officers in fiscal year 2006.

I support several amendments to this bill because they take concrete steps to correct real problems with the immigration status quo. For example, I support the Myrick amendment that provides for the removal of an illegal alien who is convicted of driving drunk. I also support the Shadegg amendment to increase penalties for document fraud and crimes of violence and drug trafficking offenses committed by illegal aliens. In addition, I support the Velázquez amendment to reduce the immigration application processing backlog that has choked the system to a virtual standstill. Unfortunately, these reasonable steps cannot overcome the fundamental flaws of H.R. 4437, which takes an unrealistic approach that will exacerbate the problems of the current system by driving the undocumented further underground, deeper into the black market and further estranged from the laws of our country.

We need to reform the broken immigration system in America, but this bill is harsh, punitive and anti-family and does not fix the many problems with the current system. Rather than pass new laws that make innocent children Federal criminals, we should vigorously enforce the laws against illegal immigration that are already on the books, hire the thousands of additional security personnel that have already been authorized to guard our borders and work for a fair, balanced immigration plan that encourages lawfulness, rewards hard work and safeguards families.

I hope my colleagues will join me in rejection of this legislation, so Congress and the

President can start over on a more productive approach to fix the broken immigration system. Vote against H.R. 4437.

VICTORY IN IRAQ RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Iraqi people on a successful election, and movement toward democracy.

I rise today to denounce the Republican leadership for manipulating the War in Iraq for political gain.

However, I want to stand up here and reiterate my opposition to the invasion of Iraq.

I have said it before and I will say it again.

I am against this war. Our troops have become the targets of the insurgents in Iraq who want us out of their country.

I knew that once we got into the war, there was no getting out. Many of our young men and women were going to get killed for the personal gain of the President.

There is no correlation between 9–11 and the War in Iraq.

Let me repeat: There is no correlation between 9–11 and the war in Iraq!

There was no faulty intelligence. We have people in key positions lying to the American people.

Get Us Out of Iraq!

HONORING THE 57TH MAYOR OF BUFFALO, NEW YORK, HON. ANTHONY M. MASIELLO

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the public service and personal strength of character of Anthony M. Masiello, who will complete his third and final term as the 57th Mayor of the City of Buffalo on December 31, 2005. Coupled with his deep and abiding love and loyalty to his beautiful family, Mayor Masiello will always be known for his enthusiastic and unwavering love for the City of Buffalo, New York. Through the triumphs and the tribulations of serving as the Chief Executive Officer of the second largest city in New York State, Mayor Masiello never gave up, never gave in and has led us to a better Buffalo.

Born the oldest of seven children, Tony Masiello learned the value of family, hard work and the importance of giving back to one's community from his parents, Bridget and Dan. Educated in Buffalo Catholic Schools, Mayor Masiello graduated from Canisius College in 1969 after a Hall of Fame basketball career with the Division I Golden Griffins.

In 1971, the voters embraced his competitive spirit and youthful energy and elected him District Councilmember and soon after, he won his first citywide election as an At-Large Councilmember on the Buffalo City Council. In 1980, he was elected to the New York State

Senate becoming "Buffalo's Senator." Re-elected to 7 2-year terms, he rose through the ranks to Minority Whip and Chair of the Democratic Conference. During his tenure in the State Legislature, then-Senator Masiello secured greater funding for the city's public school system, increased financial support for Roswell Park Cancer Institute and Children's Hospital, Buffalo's nationally known health care institutions. He helped fund housing developments and provided leadership in the passage of the Vietnam Veterans Tuition Assistance Bill.

This commitment to education, health care, housing and the needs of others would foreshadow the Mayor's greatest achievements in his next elected office.

Anthony M. Masiello was sworn in as the 57th Mayor of the city of Buffalo on January 1, 1994. Since that time, he has tackled daunting financial challenges while instituting sweeping changes in the way the city conducts its business and delivers essential services. He initiated and implemented the Mayor's Impact team; a hands-on Task Force consisting of various city departments working together to perform comprehensive clean-up, maintenance and inspection services in the city, the Citizens Service Hotline and the Good Neighbors Planning Alliance to ensure real residential participation in planning the city's future.

Mayor Masiello led the creation of the Joint Schools Construction Program, an ambitious, pioneering construction and rehabilitation program to provide a 21st Century learning environment for the city's public school students. In 2000, the Mayor proposed state legislation that allowed the city to construct new schools and renovate existing buildings with private financing and now, more than \$150 million is being spent in Phase I of the Joint Schools Construction Project to renovate nine schools. Eventually all schools will be renovated or rebuilt giving Buffalo School students the proper facilities and the high tech equipment fundamental to meeting the academic challenges of today and tomorrow.

As citizens of Buffalo, we are also indebted to the Mayor for his vision in bringing together the leaders of the local health care and medical school institutions as well as, for the first time, the neighborhood leaders from the Fruit Belt and Allentown, to create the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus in the City's center. Through mutual respect and recognition of the need for improved communication, expert planning for shared needs and future growth, the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Board of Directors continues to attract local, state and federal funding which has transformed the Campus with more than \$300 million dollars of investment in state-of-the-art health care and research facilities. Recruiting efforts for national and international medical, scientific and research talent is succeeding and all efforts have the shared goal of enhancing the opportunities for the Campus' neighbors and its neighborhood. The story and the success of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus is rightly attributable to the ability of Mayor Masiello to bring people together, impart the absolute need to work together and help direct the first \$14 million in "seed money" that led to hundreds of millions of dollars in real private/public investments.

And it is the Mayor's commitment to implementation that led to one of the greatest

achievements in the history of the City of Buffalo as it was recognized with the 2005 National American Planning Association Award for "The Queen City Hub: A Regional Action Plan for Downtown Buffalo, as the best plan in the country.

The plan's development began in the late 1990's as the Mayor created a partnership with the City of Buffalo, the University of Buffalo Urban Design Project and Buffalo Place, the leading business group dedicated to downtown development, with the mission of making downtown Buffalo a 24/7 community to live, work and play. This effort has more than succeeded with \$1 billion dollars of public and private investment in the ground and in planning stages that includes the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus to the waterfront and connects to the east and west side neighborhoods of Buffalo. The Mayor himself led "Seeing Is Believing," a series of highly successful walking tours of downtown Buffalo through 2004 and 2005 where hundreds of people followed this very tall Mayor as he walked briskly in and out of converted buildings which now features the wildly popular loft apartments, theatres, grocery stores, mixed use buildings, new single family homes and pointed proudly to green space, traffic improvements and new hope for future growth.

While he gives credit to all who joined him in this collaboration, it was Mayor Masiello who created the partnership that led to the Queen City Hub plan and developed the award-winning road map to be followed by those who will follow him.

Mayor Masiello's ability to create real partnerships with a stated goal and a heartfelt commitment to make Buffalo a better place must be rightly acknowledged. A Mayor's job is never easy and perhaps, never tougher than throughout the 12 years of the Masiello administration when the challenges of the leading a northeast urban center to a new century and in a new direction brought with it crushing financial conditions that never crushed the Mayors spirit.

And so this grateful Congressman and city resident offers heartfelt thanks and best wishes to the Honorable Anthony M. Masiello as he concludes this chapter in a lifetime of public service and begins new challenges and opportunities. We send our deepest appreciation to his family, who also serves, as we thank his beautiful wife, personal and professional partner, Kate Maseillo, and their daughters, Ariel and Madeline. We also acknowledge the Mayor's newest title—grandfather—to Rose Elizabeth, the daughter of his daughter, Kim and husband, John Adamucci, and wish health and happiness as another grandchild is on its way.

Perhaps the highest tribute we can pay to the 57th Mayor of the City of Buffalo is with his own words and so I will conclude my comments, by including those of Mayor Anthony M. Masiello—on the man who showed him by example to never walk away from the challenges of being Mayor—his father, Dan, who died earlier this year. "My father worked two or three jobs at a time for many years to support seven children. He was a foreman for the city's sanitation department and then he would work 3–11 p.m. at night unloading trucks for 10–15 years. Yet he never missed a day of work even when he was sick or tired. I remember seeing him so tired he could hardly stand up but he would go to see his second job not long after leaving his first. Some days

I would think of my Dad as I was driving to City Hall so I would just pick myself up and keep going. This is a city worth fighting for and it was my privilege to fight for it for the last 12 years."

Thank you Mayor Masiello for fighting for Buffalo, for bringing us together and bringing out the best in who we are and what we can be by continuing to work together. Thank you for leading us to a Better Buffalo.

PENSION PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2005

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 2830, the Pension Protection Act of 2005.

As the nature of our economy has changed in recent decades, our manufacturing sector has experienced difficult times. Many companies in the auto, auto parts, and steel producing industries are now burdened with expensive legacy costs, particularly pension obligations, that are increasingly difficult to honor. Long-term costs have contributed to the need for companies in these industries to seek significant cost savings, sometimes through factory closings and employee layoffs. Consequently, defined benefit pension plans sponsored by some of the companies in these industries, as well as in the airline industry, in which several companies have sought Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in recent years, have been turned over to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation [PBGC].

This legislation, while not perfect, seeks to increase private companies' funding of their employees' pension plans, as well as improve the financial health of the PBGC by increasing companies' premiums to the agency. The risk of a taxpayer-funded bailout of the PBGC, which is funded entirely by companies' that sponsor defined benefit pension plans, is very real in the near future. According to Bradley Belt, the Executive Director of the PBGC, "Unfortunately, the financial health of the PBGC is not improving. The money available to pay benefits is eventually going to run out unless Congress enacts comprehensive pension reform to get plans better funded and provide the insurance program with additional resources." Congress has a responsibility to act now to prevent a PBGC bankruptcy and future taxpayer bailout of the agency.

Last year, the PBGC absorbed 120 terminated defined benefit pension plans, and last month the agency announced that in fiscal year [FY] 2005 it had liabilities of \$79.2 billion and assets of \$56.5 billion. That amounts to a deficit in the pension insurance program of \$22.8 billion. While the FY05 deficit improved slightly over FY04's deficit of \$23.3 billion, the latest deficit figure from the PBGC is somewhat misleading. The agency's FY05 deficit actually would have increased to \$25.7 if it had included company-plan terminations announced after the fiscal year ended on September 30. Probable pension losses from companies that filed for Chapter 11 protection in September, including 2 large airlines and a major auto-parts supplier, will likely increase the PBGC's liabilities. The PBGC estimates

that the pension plans in those companies are underfunded by more than \$15 billion. The agency includes those pension plans in its category of financially weak company plans, the liabilities of which rose to \$108 billion this year from \$96 billion in 2004.

In 2004, the PBGC collected only \$1.5 billion in premiums from the companies that it insures. H.R. 2830 would raise companies' annual PBGC premium payments from \$19 to \$30 per participant. The \$30 premium would be phased in beginning in 2007, on a schedule based on a plan's funded status. Even with premium increases in H.R. 2830, it could take more than a decade to close the agency's deficit. I hope that this bill is the beginning of the PBGC's long march back to fiscal health.

Further, H.R. 2830 would increase companies' funding requirements for their defined benefit plans and would shorten the period over which funding shortfalls must be eliminated. The bill's provisions regarding both single- and multi-employer plans move companies in the right direction.

I also appreciate the willingness of Chairmen JOHN BOEHNER and BILL THOMAS to agree to a significant improvement in the "shutdown benefits" provision of H.R. 2830 as introduced. Shutdown benefits, which are payments made to long-service employees when a plant is shut down, would have been prohibited under the original version of H.R. 2830. The improved version of this measure allows a defined benefit plan to provide shutdown benefits if the plan is at least 80 percent funded. Well-funded pension plans will be able to continue providing shutdown benefits to employees who have worked hard over their careers and expect the retirement benefits that they have been promised. H.R. 2830 will soften the blow of expected plant shutdowns at companies that have fulfilled their responsibilities to their employees and funded their pension plans as they were supposed to over the years.

Finally, I am very supportive of the provisions in H.R. 2830 that would make permanent several retirement savings provisions that were included in the 2001 tax law, including the increases in IRA and 401(k) contribution limits, with their full adjustments for inflation. Prior to 2001, the maximum amount that a taxpayer could contribute to an IRA was \$2,000 per year. The 2001 tax law gradually increased that limit to \$5,000 [by 2008]. I worked to ensure that IRA contribution limits increased in that law, and believe that the permanent extension of those limits will increase the certainty needed in retirement planning. Likewise, I strongly support the bill's language that would make permanent the saver's credit for low-income taxpayers. Taxpayers with incomes below \$50,000 for a married couple, and below \$25,000 for individuals, are eligible to receive a tax credit of up to 50% of contributions [up to \$2,000] that they have made during the year to employer-sponsored retirement plans or IRAs. Increasing incentives for people of all income brackets to save for their retirements should be a top priority of Congress, and I will continue to work with my colleagues in both parties to improve the national savings rate in our country.