

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING THE ST. MARY'S COLLEGE SAILING TEAM ON WINNING TWO 2007 NCAA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, as the Washington Post so aptly put it last month, "tiny colleges in rural Southern Maryland aren't supposed to win national championships in anything." But apparently, no one told that to the young men and women of the St. Mary's College sailing team, who won two out of the three legs of the NCAA sailing "triple crown" in 2007.

The Lady Seahawks swept the national title in convincing fashion—besting the next closest competitor by 44 points—and leading sailor and Olympic hopeful, Adrienne Patterson, was named female sailor of the year. In the team race, St. Mary's prevailed in a much closer battle, beating a very strong Yale team by a score of 12 to 11. And while the Seahawk sailors fell just short of their goal of winning all three major sailing championships in one year by taking the coed national title as well, they still managed to finish sixth in that leg of the competition and cement their place among the elite sailing teams throughout all of the NCAA.

St. Mary's College had won 10 national titles entering the 2007 season—and its performance in this year's NCAA championships is proof positive its legacy of greatness is not only intact, but growing stronger with each passing year.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartfelt congratulations to the 2007 St. Mary's College Seahawks, their fans, their friends and their families. And I wish them all continued success in whatever life holds in store.

PASSPORT BACKLOG REDUCTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. The passport backlog has affected millions of people's travel plans, and I know in Houston, our district offices have been receiving calls on nearly a daily basis from constituents whose travel plans have been affected by the delay.

I visited the Houston Passport Office last month, and was amazed to learn people were arriving there hours before the office opened in order to get service. The staff at the Houston office has been working nights and weekends to clear the backlog, but there is only so much they can do.

Despite having known this increase would be coming since Congress passed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, the Administration did not prepare for this increase and as a result, State Department employees and the American public is paying the price.

This was only the first phase of implementing the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative—the second phase, which will require all individuals traveling to or from the United States by land and sea, could see an even larger demand for passports, especially in border states like Texas where people have friends and family across the border.

Last week, Maura Harty, Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Consular Affairs, testified in front of the House Foreign Affairs Committee that her office anticipates the demand for passports will continue to grow and will be approximately 23 million in 2008, and as high as 30 million by 2010.

The State Department must now do what they should have done over the last six months to a year, and hire additional employees to handle what appears will be a permanent increase in the number of passport applications they will be receiving annually.

This bill alleviates some of the backlog, but the State Department needs to ensure they have the people and systems in place to prevent this from happening in the future. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 966.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on rollcall vote number 621, agreeing to H. Res. 533 which was to provide for consideration of H.R. 2956. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

PASSPORT BACKLOG REDUCTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, S. 966 will help provide relief for the massive influx of passport applications due to a change in passport rules. This problem has frustrated many constituents in all of our districts.

Last week, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing focusing on this issue. As a result of questions I raised, it became apparent to Members of the Committee that the demands on the Bureau of Consular Affairs to get passports to Americans as fast as possible does raise fraud concerns. While the

number of adjudicators has gone up, the number charged with investigating passport fraud, has not.

In that respect, I'd like to thank Chairman LANTOS for including additional language that would allow for the hiring of retirees to assist in investigation of fraud in connection with an application for a passport. These additional investigators are critical, as many times they uncover a broader fraud ring. We should be able to serve Americans in a timely manner and ensure their security. This bill will help do that.

PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL SALI

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Mr. SALI. Madam Speaker, yesterday, the House voted on a measure that would require public sector employees at the State and local level to set up a system of monopoly bargaining. H.R. 980, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, is well-intended, as are most bills that come before this body. Yet its effects would be profoundly negative, both on fire and police departments nationwide and on the way Congress operates with respect to our most fundamental allegiance, the Federal Constitution.

As we all know, the tenth amendment to the Constitution states, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved for the States respectively, or to the people." Yet with H.R. 980, Congress is plainly overriding carefully crafted State labor laws with a single stroke. This bill dictates to States how they must deal with unionization issues, which is a serious abridgement of the role of Congress envisioned by our Founders.

We took an oath here, Madam Speaker—an oath to uphold a Constitution that does not give us the power to ride roughshod over States whenever it strikes our fancy.

Moreover, the practical effect of this legislation would be disastrous. As the International Chiefs of Police have noted, "By mandating a 'one-size fits all' approach to labor-management relations, H.R. 980 ignores the fact that every jurisdiction has unique needs and therefore requires the freedom to manage its public safety workforce in the manner that they have determined to be the most effective."

Worse yet, H.R. 980 would give the Federal Labor Relations Board the responsibility of overseeing labor-management laws in virtually every jurisdiction in the Nation, from municipalities to counties to States.

Not only is Congress extending its meddling arms into matters reserved by the Constitution for the States, but now, some of my friends across the aisle want to cut funding for the only Federal agency that reviews union

● 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.

abuses. As John Fund put it in the Wall Street Journal, “The new Democratic Congress has finally found a government agency whose budget it wants to cut: an obscure Labor Department office that monitors the compliance of unions with federal law.”

Allow me to quote Mr. Fund at some length:

In the past six years, the Office of Labor Management Standards, or OLMS, has helped secure the convictions of 775 corrupt union officials and court-ordered restitution to union members of over \$70 million in dues. The House is set to vote Thursday on a proposal to chop 20% from the OLMS budget. Every other Labor Department enforcement agency is due for a budget increase, and overall the Congress has added \$935 million to the Bush administration’s budget request for Labor. The only office the Democrats want to cut back is the one engaged in union oversight . . . GOP Rep. John Kline of Minnesota will offer an amendment Thursday to restore \$3 million of the \$11 million planned cutback in OLMS’s budget, so its budget would merely be restored to its 2007 level. Whatever sums are spent on union disclosure reports appear to be a good investment. Unions held \$22 billion in assets in 2005, and you’d think that a modest enforcement budget, representing less than 0.003% of that amount shouldn’t be the only target for cuts by budget appropriators.

Madam Speaker, allowing workers to determine whether or not they wish to join unions is consistent with the American principle of personal freedom and self-determination. A Federal law concerning public sector union membership that would render State laws irrelevant is unconstitutional, reckless, and unnecessary. And reducing funding for the one Federal agency that pursues notorious union corruption is incomprehensible in its own right—but especially coming from a new majority that heralds its own allegiance to the highest ethical standards.

These things must not be allowed. These are matters of “liberty and justice for all” we must not take lightly.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 607–629 I was absent. I would like the RECORD to show that, had I been present, I would have voted as follows: 607—“no”; 608—“no”; 609—“yes”; 610—“yes”; 611—“yes”; 612—“yes”; 613—“yes”; 614—“yes”; 615—“no”; 616—“yes”; 617—“yes”; 618—“yes”; 619—“yes”; 620—“no”; 621—“no”; 622—“no”; 623—“no”; 624—“no”; 625—“no”; 626—“no”; 627—“yes”; 628—“yes”; 629—“yes.”

PROMOTING AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL AND MEDICAL EXPORTS TO CUBA ACT OF 2007

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues in Congress to lend sup-

port to The Promoting American Agricultural and Medical Exports to Cuba Act of 2007 (H.R. 2819). This bill addresses several important issues related to our relationship with Cuba and is intended to remove obstacles to legitimate transactions.

First, it removes pre-payment requirement for U.S. agricultural exports to Cuba. It also allows for direct payments to U.S. banks for purchases by Cuba, instead of third-country banks. From 2000 to 2004, American agricultural producers were allowed to embark on a trading relationship with Cuba. During the 4 year period, agricultural trade with Cuba grew from nothing to being a \$380 million dollar trading industry. However through sanctions placed by the administration, this lucrative trading relationship was terminated after the administration placed barriers. Our American agricultural producers have potential to gain much-needed sales revenue in the Cuban market. Our agricultural sector has recently experienced declining sales numbers. Cuba, a new trading partner, will be a good customer and revitalize this area. It seems illogical that while other nations are taking advantage of this lucrative trading opportunity, the administration is denying us access to this opportunity. This bill is about America’s right to prosper by participating and competing in international trade.

This legislation provides for the lift of the travel ban and also for the expedited issuance of U.S. visas for Cubans involved in agricultural purchases. As Americans, we pride ourselves on how our liberties are protected and respected by our government. However, banning American citizens to travel to Cuba is a blatant infringement on our democratic freedom to travel without restrictions. It is not appropriate for the government to prevent citizens to visit Cuba. Also, Cuban Americans should have the right to visit their native country without limitations placed on them. Scholars, architects, travelers and students should have an opportunity for cultural exchanges with Cuba.

Another provision included in the bill would eliminate on-site verification requirements for U.S. medicines and medical supplies, which currently is a major impediment on sales. This restriction makes the process of exporting medical goods more costly and difficult.

This act would recognize certain Cuban trademarks, while protecting U.S. trademarks there, by repealing Section 211 of the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which bars U.S. courts from hearing claims by foreign nationals asserting rights to trademarks similar to or associated with expropriated property. Section 211 currently violates the regulations of the World Trade Organization. Cuba has recently threatened to not uphold trademark protection for American companies because of the unfair balance between our country and theirs.

Finally, it also provides proceeds to fund an agricultural export promotion program for agricultural export promotion activities with respect to Cuba during a 5 year period. It is imperative that we find new markets to income opportunities for our farming community; therefore, this bill provides for support of an Agricultural Export Promotion Program with respect to Cuba to be administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This bill would allow us to achieve this.

It is time to depart from our flawed foreign policy on Cuba and normalize our relations

with this nation. I strongly urge you to join me in Promoting the American Agricultural and Medical Exports to Cuba Act in 2007.

TRIBUTE TO THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARIN COMMUNITY CLINIC

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the 35th anniversary of the Marin Community Clinic. The Marin Community Clinic has consistently provided high quality primary care to the residents of the community since 1972. Originally established as a free clinic in a Mill Valley Community Church, Marin Community Clinic has grown to become a federally qualified health center serving as a critical source of health care for all residents across Marin County who cannot afford medical insurance.

Throughout my district and across the Nation, the need for health care services among low income and uninsured residents continues to grow. Many residents who cannot afford care turn to hospital emergency rooms as their only health care option. Not only does this fail to meet the needs of patients, it also dramatically increases the costs of health care for everyone. Designed to offer a more cost-effective and affordable option than emergency rooms for non-emergency care, Marin Community Clinic receives at least 5–15 referrals from hospitals every day.

Marin Community Clinic also serves as a medical home to over 13,000 patients each year, 95 percent of whom live within 200 percent of the Federal poverty level. Between 1991 and 2007, patient visits have increased from 5,000 to nearly 50,000 annually, representing a 9-fold increase. Currently, 75 percent of the Clinic’s patients are women and children. Today, Marin Community Clinic operates one clinic on the grounds of Marin General Hospital in Greenbrae and another clinic in Novato for residents of northern Marin. Next year, the organization plans to open a third clinic in San Rafael to respond to the growing community need for health care and dental services in the community.

As the clinic has grown, the organization has also developed a unique model of care that integrates physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, mental health clinicians, and case workers to deliver high quality, compassionate care. In addition, Marin Community Clinic also provides preventive health education for early breast cancer detection and for patients with chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Marin Community Clinic also operates a “Reach Out and Read” literacy program for children.

I commend Marin Community Clinic for their dedication, commitment and outstanding service for the citizens of Marin County during the last 35 years and I look forward to their continued success in meeting the health care needs with quality care for many more years to come.