

NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NETWORK TO FREEDOM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 23, 2007

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1239, the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Reauthorization Act of 2007.

Established in 1998, the Network to Freedom encompasses over 250 programs, sites, and partners in over 27 states and the District of Columbia, and is the only national program dedicated to the preservation, interpretation, and dissemination of Underground Railroad history.

Recent National Park Service financial projections, however, show the Network to Freedom budget reducing by 72 percent by the year 2011. Without continued and adequate funding, efforts to disseminate this critical history and build on the program's successes will be greatly diminished. H.R. 1239 will reauthorize the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act by increasing funding to cover needed operations costs for the National Parks Service to carry out the provisions of the program, and by increasing the availability of grant funding to support Underground Railroad preservation and interpretative projects throughout the United States.

With nine Network to Freedom sites throughout Delaware and reports that more passengers came through Wilmington on the Underground Railroad than any other place, this program has a real local significance. Underground Railroad stations were operated by a few very effective people throughout Delaware in Blackbird, Camden, Middletown, New Castle, Hockessin and Wilmington. Thomas Garrett, for example, is known as Delaware's greatest station master. Spending the greater part of his lifetime working in the Underground Railroad, Thomas Garrett is credited with helping 2,700 slaves reach freedom.

By playing a critical role in helping local communities to effectively share the stories of the men and women who resisted slavery through escape and flight in the Underground Railroad, this program highlights the rich history of Delaware and many other states and is an asset to our National Parks System. I believe strongly in promoting programs and partnerships to commemorate this time in history and educating the public about the historical significance of the Underground Railroad.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting passage of H.R. 1239.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 687, I was on a leave of absence. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea".

On rollcall No. 688, I was on a leave of absence. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea".

On rollcall No. 689, I was on a leave of absence. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea".

On rollcall No. 690, I was on a leave of absence. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea".

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, on Monday, July 23, 2007, I was absent from the House to attend the State of Northern Kentucky address.

Had I been present I would have voted:

On Rollcall No. 687—"yes"—H.R. 404, Federal Customer Service Enhancement Act.

On Rollcall No. 688—"yes"—H. Res. 553, Mourning the passing of former First Lady Lady Bird Johnson, and celebrating her life and contributions to the people of the United States.

On Rollcall No. 689—"yes"—H. Res. 519—Honoring the life and accomplishments of renowned artist Tom Lea on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

On Rollcall No. 690—"no"—Previous Question on H. Res. 558 (Rule for H.R. 3074).

MOURNING THE PASSING OF FORMER FIRST LADY, LADY BIRD JOHNSON

SPEECH OF

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 23, 2007

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of America's truly great First Ladies, Lady Bird Johnson, who taught all of us to appreciate the everyday beauty in nature . . . and who made it her life's work to spread that beauty to all corners of our Nation.

Lady Bird Johnson was very much the essence of a lady, so much so that it was literally her name. She brought grace and light to the State of Texas and to Washington, DC. She was a partner to President Lyndon Johnson in their home on the campaign trail, and in the White House.

She softened the sometimes harsh edges of President Johnson, who came to office in the midst of great turmoil in our Nation. It was the age of escalation in Vietnam, deep fears about the Soviet aggression around the world, great angst over civil rights in this Nation, and both peaceful and violent demonstrations around the Nation.

In the midst of that agonizing dynamic, Lady Bird made things around her prettier. . . and she brought light and beauty to Washington, DC, to politics, and to our Nation.

Recently, she was so proud that the Department of Education now bears the name of her beloved LBJ to illustrate their mutual dedication to education.

She was our Nation's first environmentalist, understanding that the aesthetic look of our Nation mean much to our citizens—and the survival of the human race would depend on our care for this planet.

Today, global warming has moved the environmental cause to a higher priority for governments and activists, but the matriarch of the movement was no less than President Johnson's and the Nation's First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson. She loved nature and understood the relationship of Mother Earth to the long term health of humanity.

Mr. Speaker, Lady Bird Johnson very much appreciated that you lead this House of Congress and occupy the seat that is third in line for the presidency. She deeply understood the importance of this government reflecting all our people.

Her legacy will live on in their beautiful family . . . in the flowers and beauty of the many parks that were inspired by her all over the Nation . . . and in the environmental movement that inspires us all to be better stewards of Mother Earth.

HONORING SCOTT C. STEVENS

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the commitment and patriotism of Mr. Scott Craig Stevens of Larkspur, Colorado, who will become an officer in the United States Marine Corps following his graduation from Officer Candidate School in August.

Since 1891, officer training at Quantico, Virginia has successfully developed and molded America's young men and women into individuals of character; providing them with the physical, mental, and leadership qualities necessary to uphold and defend the virtue of liberty here in America and around the world. After thorough preparation, Mr. Stevens is now qualified and ready to command his fellow brothers and sisters at arms.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to represent Mr. Stevens who has committed himself to our freedom. I urge you and my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Stevens and wishing him the best in the years to come.

HONORING AMY ZIGLER

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Amy Zigler, of Santa Rosa, CA, who exemplifies the dedication of many teachers in our Nation, teachers who put in countless hours to secure the best educational opportunities for their students.

Amy Zigler led the effort at Windsor High School to obtain a competitive grant—one of only 130 awarded nationwide—to utilize technology in mathematics classrooms. With a team of five teachers, Amy helped secure \$35,000 from Hewlett-Packard to train teachers in integration of new technology and to purchase equipment that will enable them to record class lessons and create Power Points for students' home use. Students will also be able to review lessons in detail on-line, which will be particularly helpful to those who have missed class.

Windsor High School will receive almost \$300,000 in additional school funding due to efforts of teachers and officials dedicated to securing resources for their students. Other grants will assist the school in developing a pre-med core health program, digital design classes, and a vineyard academy as well as work on sustainable energy.

Madam Speaker, we are fortunate to have teachers like Amy in our schools. She understands that our children are our most important resource for the future, and we must do all we can to provide them with the best opportunities. I am proud to honor Amy Zigler and all the teachers who make our country a better place.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I missed several rollcall votes on Monday, July 23, 2007 and Tuesday, July 24, 2007. I would like to enter into the record how I intended to vote on these rollcall votes:

On Roll No. 687, On the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 404; the Federal Customer Service Enhancement Act, I would have voted "yea."

On Roll No. 688, On the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to H. Res. 553, I would have voted "yea."

On Roll No. 689, On the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to H. Res. 519, I would have voted "yea."

On Roll No. 690, On Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 558, I would have voted "yea."

On Roll No. 691, On agreeing to the Mica amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 692, On agreeing to the Bachmann amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 693, On agreeing to the Flake amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 694, On agreeing to the Flake amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 695, On agreeing to the Chabot amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 696, On agreeing to the Westmoreland amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 697, On agreeing to the Sessions amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 698, On agreeing to the Flake amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 699, On agreeing to the Flake amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 700, On agreeing to the Flake amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 701, On agreeing to the Flake amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 702, On agreeing to the Flake amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Roll No. 703, On agreeing to the Hastings amendment, I would have voted "aye."

On Roll No. 704, On agreeing to the Frelinghuysen amendment, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber yesterday. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 687, 688, 689 and 690.

COMMIT TO FULLY FUND RESEARCH

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify a statement from my earlier remarks regarding life expectancy in the United States versus other nations. Cuba does not rank ahead of the United States in life expectancy. A person born in the U.S. can expect to live 78 years and those born in Cuba 77.08 years. Cuba's life expectancy rates are comparable to rates for the United States despite the fact that their spending on healthcare, per capita, is less than \$50 and the United States' spending per capita is almost \$7000.

We also have a comparable ranking on World Health Organization's list for over all health, with the U.S. ranked 37th and Cuba ranked 39th.

We spend more money on healthcare than any other nation in the world and yet the United States ranks 23rd in infant mortality among industrialized nations, behind nations like Germany, Canada and Cuba.

We used to be first in life expectancy in 1945, now, according to the Central Intelligence Agencies World Fact Book, we rank 45th. We must act to reverse this downward slide in the health of our Nation and the most vital step is to revitalize our commitment to universal access to healthcare, primary care and a healthcare home for every single person in America.

RECOGNITION OF ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE US-VISIT PROGRAM, P.T. WRIGHT

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a talented leader and individual, Mr. P.T. Wright. P.T., who currently serves as Acting Deputy Director of the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT) program, is retiring from the Federal government after 34 years of distinguished service.

Since P.T. began his career with the former U.S. Customs Service in 1973, he has served with distinction in a number of key positions at the Departments of the Treasury and Homeland Security. In his management roles with U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas; El Paso, Texas; Nogales,

Arizona; and Washington, DC, P.T. was intricately involved in the development of customs policies for cargo examination and processing, drug interdiction and traveler processing.

Most recently, P.T. brought his track record of outstanding leadership to the Department of Homeland Security's US-VISIT program. The program benefited from his oversight and management of day-to-day operations.

P.T.'s familiarity with the communities surrounding our land borders has been a tremendous asset to US-VISIT. P.T. understood that active engagement with border stakeholders was critical in creating a foundation of trust and support upon which to build positive long-term relationships. He tirelessly traveled Southwest border communities to inform and educate border constituents about border management developments and initiatives. As a result of his in-depth knowledge of the land border environment and his ability to speak with clarity and conviction, P.T. earned the affection of border community leaders and gained instant credibility. And when P.T. returned to Washington, he took what he heard from border constituents and helped make real, on-the-ground improvements to US-VISIT.

While not yet completed, US-VISIT is now the world's most innovative and integrated biometrics program. This is in no small part due to leaders like P.T. Wherever he went, P.T. spread the message that biometrics are a powerful tool to improve the integrity of our immigration and border management system, to make us safer, and to facilitate legitimate travel and trade. I have no doubt that US-VISIT is on a path to continue to drive the innovative use of biometrics for identity management. P.T. deserves a great deal of credit for that success.

Mr. Wright's accomplishments and leadership were recognized last year with the prestigious Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executive for his extraordinary contributions to our Nation's welfare and security over the course of a U.S. border management career spanning 34 years.

P.T. Wright is beloved within the US-VISIT program and around the many federal agencies that have worked with him. All who have had the opportunity to work with P.T. are better off for the experience. His candor and infectious sense of humor will be missed, but we are grateful for his long service and many contributions.

Madam Speaker, I urge that my colleagues join me in honoring P.T. Wright for his exceptional achievements and his commitment to excellence. P.T. has been an outstanding ambassador for US-VISIT. I commend P.T. for his service to the United States and I offer him best wishes in all of his future endeavors.

RECOGNITION OF GENEROUS CITIZENS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, today I rise in acknowledgment of the extreme generosity of some of my constituents. I wish to recognize the kindness of Marble Rock Unit 387 of the American Legion Auxiliary, from Marble Rock, Iowa.