

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRESSIONAL PENSION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2007

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this very important issue. As you know, my constituents have been directly impacted by the very issue we are voting on today. The previous Congressman from my great Congressional district, Randy Cunningham, used this Chamber and his position to line his pockets with bribe money from lobbyists. He violated the trust of his constituents and his colleagues with his behavior, tarnishing this institution. Unfortunately, the taxpayers will be forced to pay a sizeable pension to him every year.

I think this legislation is an important first step in denying pensions to Members of Congress who abuse the trust of the people. However, I want to note that this legislation did not go far enough.

First, it has a 2-year implementation window, which would allow any Member convicted over the next two years to maintain their pension. I think this is the wrong message to send. If it was constitutional, I would support retroactively taking away the pensions of convicted felons such as Dan Rostenkowski and Randy Cunningham.

Additionally, I think H.R. 476 does not go far enough in detailing the types of crimes that would trigger these provisions. That is why I am a strong supporter and cosponsor of H.R. 14, sponsored by Congressman MARK KIRK. His legislation, the Congressional Integrity Act, would deny a Congressional pension to any Member convicted, and denied a final appeal, for a much more expansive number of crimes directly related to the official duties of a Member of Congress.

This legislation is long overdue. I was proud to support a similar measure, H.R. 4011, in the 104th Congress along with many of my Democratic and Republican colleagues, including current Speaker NANCY PELOSI and our former Speaker DENNIS HASTERT.

I call on Speaker PELOSI to widen the scope of this legislation to help us regain the trust of the American people and withhold the pensions of those who violated that trust.

Furthermore, I call on Speaker PELOSI to consider important legislation to develop stricter, more transparent regulations on pork-barrel spending, also known as "airdropped" earmarking. I was proud to introduce legislation that would ban the practice of slipping earmarks into Conference reports that have not been approved by either the House or the Senate previously. These items do not have the benefit of being debated in Committee or on the floor of the House of Representatives. By requiring the Conference Committees to only consider items that were passed by one of the Chambers; we can ensure that all

projects were examined in the light of day, not the backrooms of Congress.

I ask for consideration of this important provision.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR CURT ANDRE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Honorable Curt Andre for his many years of service and leadership to the City of Turlock and greater Central Valley. Mayor Andre has served as the Mayor of Turlock for an unprecedented seventeen years and as the Chairman of Turlock's Planning Commission for the previous eight years.

Mayor Andre was born and raised in Turlock and—after earning a degree in optometry from the University of California at Berkeley—he returned to Turlock to start his profession. Mayor Andre has since served as the President of Statesmen of Stanislaus, the President of Turlock's Active 20–30 Club, a member of the United States Conference of Mayors, and a member of the California State University Advisory Board.

In addition to these roles, Mayor Andre has served as the Chairman of the Turlock Planning Commission and Mayor of Turlock for a total of twenty-nine. Overseeing the growth of a town from roughly 30,000 to over 70,000, Mayor Andre has been a much needed element of consistency in Turlock's time of transition.

For his commitment to a better quality of life in Turlock, Mayor Andre has received the Paul Harris Award, the Distinguished Public Service Award from Rotary District 5220, the 2004 Citizen of the Year Award from the Turlock Chamber of Commerce, and the 2006 Outstanding Community Leader from the California State University at Stanislaus.

Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Mayor Andre for his many years of service and dedication to the residents of Turlock. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing him many years of continued happiness and success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, on January 22, 2007, due to flight delays, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 43, 44, 45, and 46. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No. 43, yea; rollcall No. 44, yea; rollcall No. 45, yea; rollcall No. 46, yea.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2007

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to join my colleagues in the House of Representatives in unanimously passing H. Res. 51 honoring the contributions of America's Catholic Schools.

As a product of Catholic schools, I know first-hand the value of a Catholic education. Through grade school, high school, college, and law school, my Catholic schooling not only prepared me for academic success, but also taught me to serve my community by sharing my Catholic values. Thus, it is no surprise that a Catholic education also played a critical role in the intellectual and spiritual growth of my own children as well.

Today, America's Catholic schools are widely recognized among the best academic institutions in the country. From pre-schools to graduate schools, Catholic intuitions prepare nearly 2.4 million young men and women for meaningful lives rooted in spirituality, respect for others, and a sense of social responsibility.

It gives me great confidence to know that America's Catholic schools are preparing a new generation equipped with the knowledge and values to serve our communities and to meet the many challenges present in our world. On behalf of myself and my family, I want to commend the thousands of dedicated servants that make Catholic education a foundation for a better today and tomorrow.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to rise today to recognize Minnesota Public Radio's 40 years of broadcasting excellence.

Minnesota Public Radio—or simply "MPR"—as it is known to its many members and fans—began humbly on January 22nd, 1967, as a small radio station at Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. Thanks to the extraordinary vision and dogged determination of then-recent graduate Bill Kling (now MPR President) and future college president Father Colman Barry, that little college radio station has grown into a 37-station network that serves nearly 800,000 every day with its programming for radio, Internet and in-person audiences. Nationally, MPR reaches more than 14 million people through original programs produced by American Public Media.

• 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.

Throughout the years, MPR has earned distinction as one of the nation's finest public radio systems, offering world-class news and cultural programming. Its vision has always included strengthening radio nationally. In 1970, MPR helped provide the leadership to found National Public Radio, with President Kling serving on NPR's first board of directors. In 1982, MPR launched American Public Radio and its corporate parent (later renamed American Public Media), which distributes Minnesota Public Radio programming, to affiliate stations nationwide.

One of MPR's most formative years was 1974, when a talented young writer who was working as a classical music host at the station began a regular Saturday night variety show. The host was Garrison Keillor, the show "A Prairie Home Companion," and the rest was history. From its home in St. Paul's Fitzgerald Theater, and on the road, "A Prairie Home Companion" continues to entertain listeners every Saturday night on MPR and on public radio stations across America.

MPR has come a long way since its college radio station beginnings. It continues to expand and enhance its programming to serve a diverse, dynamic and growing audience. In recent years, it has launched "The Current," a critically acclaimed music service helping to showcase local talent in addition to its news and information and classical music services. In 2006, MPR completed a \$46 million capital campaign that has enlarged its St. Paul headquarters, adding to the network's ability to serve the public through high-quality programming.

MPR news and information earns its reputation as "the most trusted news source" for Minnesotans daily with its thorough and thoughtful coverage and timely reporting. This trust is exemplified through MPR's partnership with the State of Minnesota to maintain and improve the technical infrastructure to the state's Emergency Alert System (EAS). In addition, MPR serves as the backbone of the state's AMBER Alert child abduction warning system.

I join my fellow Minnesotans who are so proud of MPR's commitment to its audience. We rely on MPR for news without spin, for high quality music and cultural programming. Most of all, we appreciate the people who make MPR great. They have built a strong foundation that will ensure that MPR will be serving listeners for decades to come.

Madam Speaker, please join me in commending Minnesota Public Radio for its contributions to Minnesota and the nation throughout its first 40 years on the air.

MS. NORA ROCK

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to commend a pioneer of Brownsville, Texas, on the occasion, of her 105th birthday.

Nora Rock will celebrate that birthday tomorrow; and her name belies her strength. She is a rock. That also describes her faith in the Lord; He is her rock.

Her family came to Brownsville in the aftermath of the Civil War. Her grandfather was

part of the Union Army occupying Brownsville in the 1860s.

She is an amazing woman, a quiet, simple lady whose love in life is service to others. She believes her longevity is a gift from God, one which she repays by spending her long life helping others in her community.

She remembers going to military band concerts at Fort Brown—the Army fort around which Brownsville grew—as a teenager during World War I, and remembers the daily cannon firings during those troubled times.

Ms. Rock is a very nice and humble lady who is wholly devoted to her faith and the South Texas community. Her way is to help others in a private way, not a public way to win accolades. The look of happiness in the eyes of another is all the tribute she would want or need.

She is an extraordinary American who has seen the history of our Nation in the 20th Century from the front row. She says she is still so vibrant after 100 years because the Lord has seen fit to keep her on the earth, but also—she says with a twinkle in her eyes—because she loves chocolate.

Madam Speaker, I would imagine she would not have expected for a woman to occupy the Speaker's Chair for the U.S. House of Representatives during her lifetime; we are both glad to have the opportunity to see you there.

I ask Speaker PELOSI, and our colleagues, to join me in commending the long and beautiful life of Nora Rock.

“SUPPORT OUR TROOPS” DAY

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, one year ago I came across a young high school student who had a brilliant and patriotic idea. Alexandra McGregor set out to establish a "Support Our Troops" Day and for the second year in a row I am introducing a resolution inspired by Alexandra.

A year ago, my office got word of Alexandra's extraordinary effort to contact, local, State, and Federal officials in support of a national "Support Our Troops" Day. Alexandra even went as far as to write to one school in each State encouraging them to participate in a moment of silence on March 26th, her grandfather's birthday, who was an American soldier.

Every year, this House celebrates Memorial Day; in a month we will take time out of the schedule to celebrate our Presidents, and further down the road we will honor our veterans; but never do we honor our active-duty military men and women who are protecting our freedom today.

With inspiration from Alexandra, my resolution encourages Americans to participate in a moment of silence on March 26th to think about those who are serving this country both at home and abroad.

COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT
OF 2007

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express concerns with the College Student Relief Act, which passed the House on January 17, 2007.

As the author, while a Michigan State Senator, of legislation creating the Michigan Education Savings Plan, my commitment to helping families afford college has been a long-standing priority of my public service tenure. In fact, this program has helped thousands of Michigan families save for college expenses as well over 100,000 accounts have been opened since the program's inception.

Unfortunately, for many families, their ability to save cannot keep pace with the rising costs of post-secondary education. For these families, student loans represent an integral piece to the higher education puzzle, which is why we, as policymakers, must ensure that our actions meet the twin goals of reducing the cost of, and increasing access to, a college education.

The College Student Relief Act represents a short-term solution for student loan relief for a very specific group of student borrowers. This legislation reduces the student loan rate on only subsidized Stafford loans. It does not reduce the rates of undergraduate students borrowing from unsubsidized Stafford loans, nor does it provide relief to graduate students. Furthermore, this legislation does not permanently reduce student loan rates but cuts rates over five years, after which point they will go back to a higher interest rate, in effect providing only six months of relief.

Lastly, I believe students must be provided with borrowing choices, and they should be able to borrow from lenders who provide the most affordable option for them and their families. A competitive student loan marketplace is central to lowering the longterm costs associated with higher education.

Rest assured, I will continue to work in Congress, must work, to help make college more affordable and attainable for every American family.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE
RETIREMENT OF MR. PAT LANE

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Pat Lane, on the occasion of his retirement from Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company after more than 40 years of dedicated service. Pat will be greatly missed, and I join his many friends and co-workers with whom he served in wishing him the best of luck in the next phase of his life.

Pat began his long and distinguished career with then-General Dynamics Fort Worth Division in 1966. He was elected by his peers as the union representative for his department, a position he served in until 1974. He was then elected to the office of Business Representative for International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, District Lodge 776.