

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote on passage of the conference report on H.R. 2669. Were I able to, I would have voted "aye" on this important bill.

Furthermore, I was also unable to vote for final passage of H.R. 1908. Were I able, I would have voted "aye" on this legislation, noting that while the bill is not perfect, the Congress must continue to consider legislation to reform our patent laws. I look forward to considering a more refined product when this bill is next before the House.

PROGRESS IN IRAQ

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the chief political expert and chief military expert for the U.S. before us in the FA committee. Despite the cynics, critics, and defeatists, who want there to be bad news, General Petraeus informed Congress that military progress is being made.

Our job is not over in Iraq. It is in the best interest of America to finish our mission. War is hard, but retreat and a unilateral withdrawal is a plan for another Vietnam failure. Abandonment is what our enemy wants but not what we will give them.

General Petraeus testified that substantial progress has been made by our forces and the Iraqi counterparts since the surge began in mid-June. According to the General, the security situation in Iraq is improving, while the Iraqi government continues to assume more responsibility in the political reconciliation of the country.

Despite the progress being made, nay-sayers continue to undermine the momentum that is building in Iraq for a peaceful reconciliation. Of course there is more work to be done before we can see real success in Iraq. In fact, that is exactly why we can't walk away from this war. Iraq has become the most foremost front in the war against radical Islam. The strategy of Islamic militants assumes an American withdrawal. They believe we will grow weary of fighting for liberty and freedom abroad and that we will walk away from our commitments in Iraq. If success in Iraq is the goal, nay-sayers have to understand that giving up is simply not an option. Withdrawal will only embolden our enemies. We've got to fight them where they are and show them that we mean business. This is the time for America to stand strong and stay focused on our mission. The whole world is watching us.

And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT C. MESSINA, JR.

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of an extraordinary gentleman whom I have known personally for two decades. On September 15, 2007, Dr. Robert Messina, Jr. will be celebrated for his 20 years of Visionary Leadership at the Burlington County Community College in Mount Laurel, NJ.

Dr. Messina has been instrumental in the expansion of the Burlington County College community. While upgrading and constructing new buildings at the main campus in Pemberton, Dr. Messina saw an opportunity to truly push the College to the next level. He was steadfast in obtaining land for a brand-new, state-of-the-art second campus, located in Mount Laurel. The College and local community has enjoyed the use of six permanent buildings, including a corporate training facility and conference center, known as The Enterprise Center.

The College has expanded not only physically, but academically, as well. Dr. Messina implemented stimulating new programs that keep trend with today's industry demands. This new curriculum boasts Digital Media and Graphic Design, Biotechnology, Human Services, and several information technology certification programs that firmly cement Burlington County College as a leader in higher education for the twenty-first century.

To further reach out and benefit the surrounding Southern New Jersey community, Dr. Messina devotes his free time to the betterment of his neighbors. In the past, he has served on the national, regional, and local levels. He currently sits on the boards for the Deborah Heart & Lung Center, the Virtua Hospital Audit/Corporate Compliance Committee, and is a member of the Virtua Ambulatory Board. Nationally, Dr. Messina served two terms as the President of COMBASE, a Cooperative for the Advancement of Community-Based Postsecondary Education, and is a former board member of the American Association of Community Colleges.

Madam Speaker, Dr. Messina's infectious enthusiasm and abiding loyalty to his students is only surpassed by his genuine desire to embrace and enhance the community around him. As he celebrates 20 years of Visionary Leadership at Burlington County College, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for his leadership, commitment, and service.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I want to recognize the City of Bloomfield Hills, in Oakland County, Michigan which is celebrating its 75th anniversary on September 16, 2007. This city's rolling hills and beautiful gar-

dens show why it continues to rank among Michigan's loveliest communities.

Bloomfield Hills celebrates its 75th anniversary simultaneously with the 200th anniversary of Woodward Avenue, the nation's oldest byway. The two are inextricably linked because as Woodward developed, city dwellers were able to travel north of Detroit to enjoy fresh air and relaxed country living.

Originally a densely wooded wilderness inhabited by Native Americans, the Village of Bloomfield Hills grew from pastoral farms and orchards into the Estate Era, where men of vision and high ideals like, George Booth, bought huge parcels of land for summer retreats. Known by many names, including Bagley's Corners, Circle City, and Bloomfield Centre, the Village of Bloomfield Hills officially became a city in 1932 upon adoption of its City Charter.

George Booth envisioned elaborate plans for the acreage he acquired in 1904, designing a church and school for the benefit of the community. The jewel of his imagination, the Cranbrook Educational Community, a nationally acclaimed educational, scientific, and artistic complex, is on of Bloomfield Hills' most notable and unique treasures. Thousands visit the historical campus each year, enjoying the Cranbrook Academy of Art and the Cranbrook Institute of Science.

Madam Speaker, today Bloomfield Hills is a vibrant community in Oakland County that is home to over 4,000 residents, a preeminent graduate school of art, and Michigan's largest natural history museum. I congratulate them on their 75th anniversary and wish the residents many more years of prosperity.

A TRIBUTE TO DIANE BEEDLE

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bid farewell to one of the most creative, competent, caring and clever Hill staffers, my Legislative Director, Diane Beedle. For four years, Diane has moved a legislative agenda that addresses issues as diverse as the safety of children's products, outsourcing of American jobs, immigrant rights, data security and identity theft, new telecommunications technologies, private military contracts, ending horse slaughter, auto safety, energy independence, expanding health care, preventing cancer, and ending the war in Iraq. She prepared me for all of the many hearings in the Energy and Commerce Committee including, of course, the priority sporting hearings—boxing, steroids, and college bowl games, and far more.

As if that weren't enough, Diane was responsible for identifying and securing funding for projects important to the 9th Congressional District of Illinois. There is less flooding, better law enforcement, improved transportation, and better services for vulnerable people because of Diane's work. How does she do it all? As Kim, our office manager and executive assistant/scheduler said, "She rose to the challenges and opportunities that the LD position offered, and she is very organized and methodical as well as being a very positive and nurturing presence in the office."

Diane has a gift for negotiating. I have watched her push my position as far as she could and then a little further, her demeanor always pleasant, her counter proposals always workable, her objections irrefutable. She won the respect and friendship of staff across party and ideological lines. I will truly miss her bargaining skills.

Diane is able to translate complicated issues into language comprehensible to her boss and to constituents. I receive many kudos for letters Diane has written that are clear and directly responsive to the concerns of individual district residents, and not just "thank you for your interest" letters and she has prepared me for meetings on issues that would otherwise be too "high tech" for me.

On top of all that, Diane has been a leader in the office, providing help to her co-workers in the office in many different ways. Kevin (though officially one of the beautiful people on Capitol Hill and quite slim) has an astonishing capacity for food. Diane affectionately calls him the "human garbage disposal" (in a good way), yet still treats him and the rest of the office with her wonderful baked goods, lemon bars being a specialty.

Our chief of staff especially appreciated Diane's magic with naming bills. Her favorite: the Stop Attempted Fraud against Everyone's Cell and Land Line—a bill title that is instantly forgettable until you realize the acronym is the SAFE CALL ACT.

Megan described what Diane has meant not only to her but to other staff members. "Diane has always been an excellent mentor to me, teaching me how to make the most of contacts and pointing me toward good legislative ideas." She also mentioned what we all know: Diane is an excellent punster.

Diane is leaving us now, soon to be embracing a new role in her life—that of Mom. Hearing the good news, everyone in the office wanted to help Diane and her husband Adrian by suggesting some really great baby names. Peter, a new father himself and Diane's "work husband," brought in baby naming books. We had a Name the Baby list put up with interesting ideas such as Noble Eagle, Sparky and Porterhouse, and some more suitable boy names including Mason, Lucas, Oliver, Cooper, Oscar, Lucca, Gideon and Felix. Disregarding our suggestions in total, they chose Franklin.

We all look forward to many visits from Diane, Adrian, Baby Franklin and Suki the dog, who we will also miss very much. All of us love Diane very much, thank her for her service and wish her and her growing family the best of everything.

RECOGNIZING 100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF NEIMAN MARCUS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Neiman Marcus as it celebrates its 100-year anniversary.

The founders—Herbert Marcus, his sister, Carrie Marcus Neiman, and her husband, A.L. Neiman—were all under age 30 when they created the luxury retailer. They opened its

flagship store in downtown Dallas, TX, on this day in 1907.

Over the last century, Neiman Marcus has not only left an indelible mark on the Dallas culture and society, but continues to play a vital role in the business community.

For over 19 years, Neiman Marcus has hosted the annual Neiman Marcus Adolphus Children's Parade benefiting the Child Life Program at Children's Medical Center, Dallas. This event raises money for its specialized programs including music therapy, support groups, medical camps and bedside activities. It draws crowds of over 300,000 and it brings hope and happiness to families across the country during the holiday season.

With a long history of supporting the arts, Neiman Marcus continues this tradition by sustaining the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts and the Dallas Arts District, helping to establish Dallas as a renowned center for performing and visual arts.

Expanding from its original store in historic downtown Dallas, Neiman Marcus now operates nationwide with total store operations of over 5 million gross square feet, providing economic growth and secure jobs across the country and for the north Texas region.

With a true sense of philanthropy and generosity, Neiman Marcus has become more than a retail company; its company culture reflects the true spirit of community. On behalf of the 30th Congressional District of Texas, please join me in congratulating Neiman Marcus Group on the occasion of its 100th year anniversary.

OUR STRONG ALLY AUSTRALIA

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to thank Australia for their continued commitment to the global war on terrorism and to recognize our long and proud history of working together to promote democracy and freedom around the world. Australia is the only country to have fought beside us in every major conflict of the 20th and 21st centuries.

President Bush and Prime Minister John Howard reaffirmed our friendship last week by signing a defense trade cooperation treaty. As a partner in the fight against terrorism, Australia has committed troops and resources to assist our Armed Forces around the world. They have deployed 1,500 troops in Iraq and 970 in Afghanistan.

While our friendship and partnership extends well beyond defense, it is comforting and reassuring to have such a dedicated ally who understands that we must stop our enemies in Iraq and Afghanistan to protect American and Australian families and all those who share the values of freedom and democracy around the world.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTION DIGITAL AND WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 4, 2007

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 694, the Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act of 2007, and I would start by thanking House Science Committee Chairman BART GORDON and Ranking Member RALPH HALL for their work to pass this bill. Additionally, Representative ED TOWNS has been a tireless advocate in moving this bill forward and it has been a pleasure working with him to pass this legislation.

This bill would establish a new grant program to provide funding of specific technologies to help ensure institutions like historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and tribal colleges have the tools necessary to prepare their students to engage and participate in the increasingly global and competitive economy.

Now, more than ever, we are seeing other countries become increasingly competitive with the United States, with science and math scores equaling or exceeding average scores for American students.

Additionally, another example of the nature of the problem we face globally can be seen in the engineering field. By 2008, India is expected to increase to a little over 700,000 young engineering professionals and China is expected to increase to 2.1 million. Conversely, the U.S. is predicated to stay stagnant at 700,000 engineering young professionals by 2008 and other fields like life sciences are declining. This is a trend that cannot be allowed to continue if the United States wants to maintain its leadership role in the future global economy and graduate students that have the capacity to be this world's best and brightest.

One of the realities that we need to address in order to ensure this happens is to make sure all populations in this country have access to basic technologies, something that is currently not the case for all segments of the American population. Although 55 percent of the U.S. population has internet access at home overall, only 36 percent of African-American and Hispanic households do, according to a U.S. Census report issued in October 2005.

This bill would work to eliminate this "digital divide" by establishing a new grant program within the Department of Commerce to strengthen the ability of minority-serving institutions to purchase infrastructure and provide technology education services, providing students with the same access to technology as their peers at other colleges and universities.

This legislation is about even more than just equality in education; it is about economic advancement and ensuring that America retains its edge in the math, science and technology fields—a critically important requirement in today's global economy.