

years of her life were spent living in a 2-room house on her grandmother's homestead. The water source for their house was a spring outside the front door and a path led to the bathroom. That property is still a part of her ranch and she values it far beyond the price it might bring on the open market.

Madam Speaker, in addition to being a life-long rancher, Sharon Livingston has also been a teacher and a coach, graduating from Eastern Oregon University following 12 years of school in Long Creek. As a teacher and coach, her skills as a trainer and motivator became her strengths as a leader in the ranching industry. She always does her homework, she works hard to understand complex issues, and she is adept at helping others to grasp the need to go in new directions.

When I was in Burns, OR this summer to meet with ranchers who had their grazing land obliterated by devastating wildfires, Sharon was there to offer encouragement and to ensure that the needed relief was on its way. As you can imagine, Madam Speaker, with livelihoods in serious jeopardy, emotions can run high. Sharon was there as a voice of reason and a message of hope. She made a difference. Her straightforward ways, her openness, and her confidence in the future helped immensely to set us all at ease about dealing with the effects of the catastrophic fire.

Her pride in her industry and her community is strong and deep, but she would tell you that her greatest pride and greatest joy is derived from her family. Tragically, she lost her husband, Fred Livingston, to cancer in 1992. Sharon married Fred in 1957. Sharon gives him high praise when she describes Fred as a cowboy, a calf roper, and a fine man.

Sharon and Fred raised three children: Rilla, Clayton, and Fred John (FJ). Rilla and Clayton live in the Pendleton area, and FJ is Sharon's partner on the ranch. Sharon has four grandchildren whom she treasures. Sharon loves her ranch, her cattle, and her horses. She says that her heart swells with pride when her oldest grandson rides and helps with the cattle. She takes great joy and satisfaction seeing yet another generation value the lifestyle that has meant so much to her. She looks forward to the very near future when her twin granddaughters and another grandson learn to ride and rope. You can be sure that Sharon will be there to teach them.

Madam Speaker, I am so proud of my friend, Sharon Livingston. She is a woman of her word and a woman of conviction. You only have to meet Sharon once to know that she has a keen intellect and a caring heart that makes her a natural born leader. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting this amazing woman who has served so ably as president of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association.

HONORING CHARLES G. WIMSATT

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charles Wimsatt, an outstanding man with a long history of service to our country and to Kentucky. Mr. Wimsatt has been an active member of American Legion Post 121 in Bardstown, Kentucky for nearly 60 years.

Mr. Wimsatt joined the Army in 1953, serving as a medic. He retired from the Army with the rank of Corporal.

Mr. Wimsatt has made it a personal priority to serve his fellow veterans through his work with American Legion Post 121. He is currently in his 4th term as Post Commander. Under his command the post reached its 100 percent membership goal for the first time in 15 years. Mr. Wimsatt also directed recent facility renovations.

Beyond his service to the American Legion, Charles Wimsatt has found time to be active in many other worthy causes. He has played an integral part in fundraising for his local National Guard unit and is currently raising money for a VA medical facility in Germany. Mr. Wimsatt also served on the Black Mud Volunteer Fire Department for 46 years.

It is my privilege to honor Charles G. Wimsatt today, before the entire United States House of Representatives, for his service to our country and his tireless efforts on behalf of American Legion Post 121. Mr. Wimsatt has made a significant difference to his Old Kentucky Home.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 1010 on H.R. 3224, 1011 on H. Res. 573, and 1012 on H. Res. 747, I was detained due to traffic and was not able to vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all 3.

ENDORING THE CALL FOR FAIR, COMPREHENSIVE SENTENCING REFORM IN NEW YORK

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to the many urging New York State—and the country, at large—to reform its sentencing. The New York Times editorial, "Rational Sentencing," published October 25, 2007, takes up that challenge, forcefully arguing that draconian measures enacted over 30 years ago have done nothing to curb drug use. They have, however, maintained an inflated prison population, hamstrung the discretions of judges, and burdened the state with exorbitant cost. A failed system demands creative solutions—and it demands that they come speedily.

It is incumbent upon the state to empower judges and end indeterminate sentencing that allows them to set minimums and maximums but little else. It should deal with nonviolent offenders in a sensible, compassionate manner, offering community-based treatment in lieu of jail time. It should restore prison-based education and training programs, ridding jails of their revolving-door culture and arming inmates with marketable skills. It should create a permanent and independent sentencing

commission tasked with advising legislators, so that we may never again devolve into an unfair system.

After decades fraught with injustice, smart and widespread reform is long overdue.

RATIONAL SENTENCING

New York sparked a disastrous national trend during the 1970s with laws that often penalized first-time drug felons more severely than rapists or murderers. Imitated throughout the country, New York's so-called Rockefeller laws drove up the prison population tenfold and cost the states a fortune, but did nothing to curb the drug trade. Worse still, they tied the hands of judges and destroyed countless young lives—by requiring long prison terms in cases where leniency and drug treatment were clearly warranted.

New York has made incremental changes to the Rockefeller laws in recent years, but has stopped short of restoring judicial discretion. Governor Eliot Spitzer seemed to be pushing in that direction this year when he appointed a commission to study the range of state sentencing practices.

The commission's preliminary report contains many valuable recommendations for fixing the sentencing system as a whole. But the superficial treatment given the Rockefeller laws has raised fears among fair-sentencing advocates that the commission intends to duck the issue in its final report, due next spring. That cannot be allowed to happen. Voters deserve a thorough airing of this issue and a full menu of options for reforming the most draconian drug laws the country has yet seen.

The report rightly calls for ending New York's byzantine system of "indeterminate sentencing," under which a judge imposes a minimum and a maximum sentence and the Parole Board decides when to release an offender. It calls for sentencing certain nonviolent offenders to community-based treatment instead of prison. It also recommends restoring prison-based educational and training programs, which have been shown to cut recidivism by giving inmates marketable skills.

Most important, the report calls for the State to establish a permanent, independent sentencing commission to advise legislators. Already working in several states, such commissions have independence and statutory authority. At their best, they help legislatures make rational decisions and avoid disastrous policies that have failed elsewhere, like New York.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, October 29, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 3224, H. Res. 573, and H. Res. 747 and wish the RECORD to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1010 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3224, the Dam Rehabilitation and Repair Act of 2007, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1011 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res.

573, Recognizing and commending the efforts of the United States public and advocacy groups to raise awareness about and help end the worsening humanitarian crisis and genocide in Darfur, Sudan, and for other purposes, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1012 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 747, Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING THE PORTLAND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Portland Volunteer Fire Department serves 64 square miles of Sumner County outside the city limits. The department has received three U.S. Homeland Department of Security grants.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Portland, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Kenny Crowson, Asst. Chief George Knuckols, Captain Richard Lanius, Lt. Jessica Knuckols, Lt. Bobby Wilson, Tony Green, Brent Dyer, Josh Covington, Tav Matthews, Arthur Benjamin, Samantha Roberson, Scott Meece, Lindi Costner, Williams Keen, Russ Caudill, David Roberson, and Jim Youngblood.

IN MEMORY OF JOE CRAPA

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, we were saddened with the news last week that an outstanding public servant had lost his battle with cancer. Joseph R. Crapa was serving as the executive director of the bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) at the time of his passing on October 25. It was my privilege to know Joe and to work with him and his fellow commissioners and the staff at USCIRF in their dedicated efforts to protecting religious freedom throughout the world.

I would like to share the touching remarks our colleague Rep. DAVID OBEY gave at Joe's

funeral on October 29 at St. Peters Catholic Church on Capitol Hill. Joe had served as Congressman OBEY's chief of staff from 1987 to 1997, the last three years as Democratic counsel to the House Appropriations Committee. I also insert for the RECORD a news release from the USCIRF mourning the passing of its executive director.

We express our deepest condolences to Joe's wife of 40 years, Barbara Vaskis Crapa of Alexandria, Virginia; his son Judd, daughter-in-law Gretchen, and grandsons Sebastian and Baird.

REMARKS BY CONGRESSMAN DAVID OBEY— FUNERAL FOR JOSEPH R. CRAPA

Joe Crapa could do just about everything! He taught high school.

He represented 1,000 teachers in budget negotiations.

He taught college courses in literature, writing, and government.

He was a fundraiser, and outreach director for the congressional Democratic leadership.

He was a key figure in a government relations firm.

He represented three separate government departments in dealing with Congress—Commerce, USAID, and EPA.

Building on his experience growing up in "rural" Brooklyn, he served as staff director for a House Agriculture Subcommittee.

He was staff director for two of the "easiest" people in Congress to work for—Chuck Schumer and me.

He worked at my side for 10 years.

Finally, he served as Executive Director of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

He did all of those jobs well.

He had a superb professional career! But WHAT he accomplished professionally in his life is not nearly as impressive as HOW he did it.

This is a tough and often indifferent town. If you are not alert, it can wear you down. Temptations always abound to cut corners and settle for boilerplate mediocrity. But not Joe!!

Joe was a tough, street smart pol in the best sense of that term, but what epitomized him most of all was his deep understanding of human nature and his unflagging honesty. I cannot tell you how many times he said to me, "Dave, that's the dumbest idea I've ever heard of." And sometimes his language wasn't that sweet. Joe was determined to strip away the irrelevant, the secondary, the trivial, in order to reach the fundamental.

Where did that come from? I think it came from a character and intellect that was expanded and burnished by his exposure to the questions that count by the Jesuits and then as a PhD student in literature, being exposed to the core realities of human experience.

As a practical, operational public man, he—with no guilt—accepted the compromises that are the stock in trade in politics. He understood what Will Rogers meant when he said, "When two people agree on everything, one of them is unnecessary." He understood, as my great Irish friend John Hume once told me, that "in a democracy politics is a substitute for violence."

But Joe also had rock hard convictions on a few essentials:

He fiercely believed that the widening gap between the most privileged and the poor is obscene.

He believed, as Bill Moyers has said, that politics "must be more than who gets what; that it should rise above the merely transactional and become transformational; that it must even the starting gate so that people equal in humanity but not in resources have a reasonable opportunity to pursue a full and decent life."

He passionately believed that every world citizen had a right to pursue their religious beliefs free from persecution or dictation and he was immensely proud of his relationship at the Commission with those of every philosophical bent, including Frank Wolf, who was similarly passionate.

He believed in a religion of tolerance and respect.

He worried that politicians could trivialize and cheapen religion. He did not believe it was legitimate for politicians to claim God as their own celestial party chairman, as a fellow New Yorker once warned against.

As Barbara pointed out Saturday, he believed that a respectful but separate relationship between church and state was essential to preserve and protect both religion and democracy.

Joe loved his last job, but I will always see him as a superb example of so many on Capitol Hill who never serve in public office, whose name is never on the door, who day in and day out love their country and try to make this a better world.

Because I believe so many of you see Joe the way I see him, I would like to share with you part of a letter I wrote to Joe when he went into the hospital for the last time:

"Joe—Judd was in my office yesterday and told me the latest on your health situation. I wish to God you had received better news. I'm about to leave to catch a plane for Wisconsin, but before I did I wanted to put a few thoughts down on paper so that you know how I feel about you.

When I was first interviewing you to run my office, my first impression in the first 10 minutes we talked was that there was no way in God's green earth that I could ever develop chemistry with this fast talking refugee from Brooklyn. I have been forever grateful that you proved me wrong.

I hope you know how grateful I am for everything you did with and for me. . . . I was blessed to have your energy, know how, insight, judgment, and wisdom. I hate to think how little I would have accomplished without having you beside me during these years.

But even more than that, I appreciate the personal support and friendship you gave me in those years, even down to today. Politics is a tough life and those of us who live it know how exposed and vulnerable we all are.

During these years, you were able to give me sound advice on every front, but the most valuable aspect of your counsel was the fact that underneath it all was a moral core that was true to both you and me. That is a special link between "brothers" that I hope we both treasure.

You are a great public servant, a great friend, and a great human being. Thank you for understanding and accepting my weakness and shortcomings and for enhancing my strengths. Please know that there are many, many, many people in this town who feel the same way about you. . . ."

And as we say in the House of Representatives, I ask unanimous consent that these sentiments be considered the views of all of you here who knew, respected, and loved him.

USCIRF MOURNS PASSING OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOSEPH CRAPA

WASHINGTON.—Joseph R. Crapa, the Executive Director of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, died Thursday after a struggle with cancer. Mr. Crapa, 63, had led the Commission since 2002.

"Joe had sharp political instincts but a soft personal touch," said Michael Cromartie, current Chair of the Commission. "He had an unwavering, principled commitment to advancing the work of this bipartisan Commission in protecting religious