

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

LIEF ERICKSON RECOGNIZED FOR VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 9, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, Mr. Lief Erickson, of Houston, TX, was recently recognized by the NAACP when he was given the ALEX award or Award for Legal Excellence. The award was named after Congressman Alexander Green who was president of the Houston branch of the NAACP for 10 years.

The award is presented to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the NAACP's Houston legal programs, people who have demonstrated a commitment to pro bono legal services within the community or to people whose legal contributions significantly impacted persons in the community served by the NAACP.

The path to being recognized with this prestigious award began a long time ago when Erickson was living in Houston in 1977 and working as a carpet layer. He met a young up-and-coming lawyer who recognized his potential and encouraged him to become a lawyer to make a difference in the community.

With only a 10th grade education and rugged determination, Erickson decided to become an attorney. After obtaining his high school equivalency diploma, he enrolled in the University of St. Thomas and earned a Bachelor's Degree in psychology. He later entered and graduated from Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall Law School. I had the pleasure of swearing him in as an attorney marking this great accomplishment. It was a long journey in Erickson's life to go from high school dropout to attorney.

After completing law school, he worked for a private law firm for 2 years and then became a prosecutor for the Drug Task Force in Waller County, Texas. Two years later, Erickson realized that his heart and conscience were better suited for criminal defense to assist the downtrodden and disenfranchised. Since 2000, Erickson has defended more than 3,000 clients. He has also devoted his weekends over 13 months to give back to the community as a volunteer to help the NAACP with criminal defense cases in their pro bono legal redress clinic. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays he volunteers to assist walk-in clients with consultation and legal advice. By donating his weekends to serve others, he is a shining example of service above self.

It is for his generous volunteer efforts that the NAACP recognized Mr. Erickson with the ALEX Award. I salute Lief Erickson for his spirit of service and volunteerism.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING MAJOR GENERAL RONALD H. MARKARIAN

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 9, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor MG (California Retired) Ronald Markarian for his dedicated service to the veterans of Fresno, California.

Major General Markarian was born and raised in the Fresno area and graduated from California State University, Fresno. While in college he joined the Army National Guard, where he served for 3 years with the Heavy Mortar Company of the 185th Infantry Regiment. He entered the Air Force upon graduating from college. While in the Air Force, Major General Markarian served in many positions, including a position at the Pentagon, as Chief of Air Reconnaissance Systems and as Director of the USAF Intelligence Reserve Forces. After 30 years of military service, he retired in August 1980 as a colonel.

Immediately after retirement, Major General Markarian became a member of the California State Military Reserve and was assigned to the headquarters, State Military Reserve at the California Military Department in Sacramento, where he was eventually appointed Commanding General of the State Military Reserve. In July 1990, he was promoted to Major General. After nearly 46 years of uniformed military service, Major General Markarian retired in October 1995. His service to his community and the veterans did not stop upon his retirement.

Major General Markarian has received many awards, including two Legion of Merit awards and the Bronze Star. He has received awards from many military organizations, including the Association of the U.S. Army's National Golden Eagle Award and National Distinguished Service Award, and he was the 2002 recipient of the organization's Anthony Drexel Biddle Award, President's Award. Major General Markarian has also graduated from several military schools and holds a master's degree in public administration from George Washington University.

Major General Markarian is active in community affairs and has served in a variety of leadership roles in military, veteran and public service organizations. He served on several State and Federal boards and has been the Director of the United States Selective Service System in California since his appointment in 1987. He was instrumental in founding the Association of the United States Army, AUSA, Chapter 6105 in 1982, and served as the first president of the chapter. He later served two additional terms. In total, he served 15 years as president. During his last presidency, the chapter was designated Best Chapter in AUSA for 7 consecutive years, from 2000 to 2006. He also served as the AUSA sixth region president and an AUSA national trustee.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of MG Ronald Markarian for his tireless service

to the military and veteran community. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Major General Markarian many years of continued success.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3043, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Conference Report on the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education and Military Construction/Veterans Affairs Appropriations bills. This bill begins to correct key deficits in biomedical research, elementary and secondary education, job training, and health care for veterans and civilians alike, and sets out a clear, sustainable vision for the future. I want to thank and congratulate Chairman OBEY, Ranking Member WALSH, the Conference and their staff for putting together such an excellent bill, one which will bring needed relief to so many of our constituents.

The President, of course, has vowed to veto this bill, because he believes it costs too much, that we can't afford to make these investments in cancer research, in Head Start, in economic development. Meanwhile, the President is asking us to spend an additional \$200 billion this year alone in his misguided war in Iraq. \$9.8 billion, the amount by which this bill exceeds the President's request, would pay for approximately 1 month of that war. Instead, this bill would use that money to help States provide health coverage to people with pre-existing conditions, help college-ready low-income students afford higher education, and help low-income individuals and their families keep their homes warm in the winter-time—a winter-time that could well feature oil at costs in excess of \$100 a barrel.

The President says we can't afford to make these investments; I believe we can't afford not to. These are investments which pay dividends over time, investments which will keep America strong, competitive and healthy.

While I strongly support this Conference Report, I would be remiss if I didn't express my concern that this bill includes a \$27.8 million increase for abstinence education programs, which research has shown to be ineffective, and worse, often medically inaccurate. Since 2001, we have spent more than \$1 billion on these programs, some of which tell our children that using condoms is "like Russian Roulette," and that HIV/AIDS can be transmitted through skin-to-skin contact.

● 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.

Madam Speaker, teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections are serious problems that demand serious solutions. Of course we should want to delay the onset of sexual activity in our children—what parent of a teenager wouldn't want that? But we cannot let that desire blind us to the very real fact that teenagers, despite our best intentions, will and do have sex, and that our wanting them not to does not absolve us of our obligation to protect them and keep them safe.

This money does not exist merely on paper—it is real money which we are borrowing from countries whose interests are imatical to our own, countries that have accumulated sovereign wealth funds at alarming rates over the past 6 years. And we are leaving this legacy of fiscal wreckage to our children, and our children's children, mortgaging away their future at a rate of more than \$15,000 per second.

Since 2001, China's accumulation of foreign reserves, mostly U.S. dollars, have increased from \$46.6 billion to \$1.066 trillion—that is, every new dollar we borrow adds leverage to China—which has profoundly different strategic aims than we do.

The idea that this is a preferable alternative to a bill that would help 95 percent of the people who felt any impact from its passage is unconscionable. The idea that we should sacrifice the futures of our children and our grandchildren in order to have our cake and eat it too, to continue giving enormous tax preferences to the richest of the rich in this country is morally bankrupt and fiscally unsound.

Madam Speaker, income is income. Even if we accept that there should be a distinction between the taxation of labor and capital income, income received as payment for the service of investing other people's money is not capital income under even the loosest of possible understandings. The idea that a hedge fund manager earning \$500 million a year should be taxed at a lower rate than his secretary, who earns \$40,000 a year is preposterous in both moral and economic terms and should embarrass us all. I know it embarrasses me, and that it embarrasses my constituents.

This bill is about making a choice between what is right and what is easy. I applaud Chairman RANGEL for standing firm in the face of overwhelming pressure to do the easy thing, for drawing a line in the sand and demanding that we pass a bill which is true to our principles. We were not elected to make easy choices—we were elected to do right by our constituents, their children, and their children's children. I am proud to support this bill today, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

HONORING WILLIE JAMES WHISENHUNT, RPH, AS THE 2007 TRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY HEALTH CHAMPIONS HONOREE BY THE WEST FRESNO HEALTHCARE COALITION

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 9, 2007

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Willie James Whisenhunt, RPh

for being named a 2007 honoree at the Tribute to Health Champions reception by the West Fresno Healthcare Coalition. A mere three days after arriving in our fair city, Mr. Whisenhunt opened the Westside Pharmacy. More than 30 years later his career and contributions to the area are impressive and most deserving of this honor.

Mr. Whisenhunt was born in Vredenburgh, AL, the eldest of three children. His father, a carpenter, died when Mr. Whisenhunt was 10, and he was raised by his grandparents, uncle and aunt. His family taught him the value of hard work, commitment, and unconditional love. He received his high school diploma from Escambia County Training School, later receiving his bachelor's of science in pharmaceuticals from Xavier University of Louisiana.

Community service has always been a focus in Mr. Whisenhunt's life, particularly his commitment to the youth of west Fresno. He has sponsored various athletic teams at Edison High School, including both the women's and men's baseball teams. He has helped southwest Fresno students by aiding speech teams and academic decathlons. He has been a mentor to our youth, promoting higher education in the community, encouraging students to pursue careers in science and funding trips to historically black colleges and our Nation's Capital. Outside the boundaries of west Fresno, he has served in various leadership positions, holding the distinction of being the only African American president of the Fresno-Madera Pharmacists Association.

Furthermore, Mr. Whisenhunt has been a lifelong supporter to the United Negro College Fund, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Silesian Society of Don Bosco. In 2006, he received the Health Care Professional of the Year Small Business Award from the Fresno Black Expo.

Willie James Whisenhunt is a great man and a true example of the American Dream. It is with great pride that I congratulate him for receiving this distinguished award and for all that he does on behalf of west Fresno.

TRIBUTE TO JACKSON HOLCOMB

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 9, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate a student from Gilbert Middle School in Ames, IA, for a recent academic accomplishment.

Jackson Holcomb received a distinguished award at the Belin-Blank Recognition Ceremony on October 6, 2007, at the University of Iowa. Jackson's award is in honor of his top one percent score on the Belin-Blank Exceptional Student Talent Search EXPLORE test. This test measures academic development in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

Jackson's parents, Todd and Jane Holcomb, and his teachers are also to be commended and congratulated for this great accomplishment. They have instilled the importance and value of education in Jackson that has helped him to excel in school and beyond.

I commend Jackson Holcomb for his hard work in the classroom. I consider it an honor

to represent Jackson and his family in Congress, and I wish him continued success in his academic studies.

TRIBUTE TO TOM COHEN

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 9, 2007

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the deeds of an outstanding American, Mr. Tom Cohen, who was recognized October 30, 2007, for his great humanitarian efforts and tremendous support of the worthwhile work of Orphans International.

Mr. Cohen's work with Orphans International began after his family was struck with terrible tragedy. In 2004, he lost his beloved son-in-law, Cresenta Fernando, Ph.D., in the December tsunami, which devastated his native country of Sri Lanka. Out of this awful loss, Tom saw an opportunity to keep Cresenta's memory alive by helping to improve the lives of disadvantaged children throughout Sri Lanka.

Mr. Cohen began working with Jim Luce, the founder and executive director of the non-profit organization Orphans International, which had established projects that were helping to meet the needs of children in other parts of the world. Together, they created a branch of the organization that would serve the most vulnerable children of Sri Lanka in honor of Cresenta.

Orphans International Sri Lanka, or OI Sri Lanka, is a part of Orphans International Worldwide's network. This organization works to meet the physical, emotional, educational, and social needs of children who are victims of natural disasters, armed conflicts, and other crises that have taken away their parents, homes, and their chances for a better life.

Mr. Cohen is not only a compassionate philanthropist, but also an accomplished professional. As the head of compliance at Bear Steams, he has helped contribute to that company's great success.

Mr. Cohen's work for Orphans International has been a family effort. Tom's wife Donna Cohen has worked tirelessly with him to raise funds for this worthwhile goal, and to support their daughter Ariele Cohen in her role as the president of the OI Sri Lanka Board of Directors and a member of the OI America Advisory Board.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to working with and recognizing the efforts of dedicated humanitarians like Tom Cohen. I am proud to represent such a fine man in Congress.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, everyone involved in Orphans International, Tom's family and friends, and me in recognizing Tom Cohen's outstanding service to the global community.