

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commanding Corey D. Jepson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF THE “REDUCING OVER-CLASSIFICATION ACT OF 2007”

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, today all Democratic members of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing & Terrorism Risk Assessment are introducing legislation that will put the Department of Homeland Security on the path to better information sharing by turning back the tide of over-classification that imperils our ability to make America safer from terrorism.

The “Reducing Over-Classification Act of 2007” (ROC Act) gives Congress the tools to curtail the federal government’s widespread and mushrooming practice of classifying practically everything that moves.

Almost three and a half years ago, the 9/11 Commission made clear the urgent need to eliminate the over-classification of intelligence information by the Federal Government.

The Commissioners found that over-classification interferes with the sharing of critical information between the Federal Government and its State, local, and tribal partners on the front lines of our nation’s homeland security efforts.

Sadly, the numbers tell us that we’re still not heeding the 9/11 Commission’s warning.

According to the Information Security Oversight Office at the National Archives, the number of new classification actions jumped from eight million in 2001 to 14 million in 2005. During the same period, the quantity of declassified pages dropped from 100 million in 2001 to 29 million in 2005.

To make matters worse, we learned this past year that some agencies were withdrawing archived records from public access and reclassifying them.

Together with the exponential growth in the amount of material that is classified, we’ve seen the level of spending on classification go up considerably.

In 2001, \$4.5 billion was spent on classification but by 2004, we were spending \$7.1 billion.

In addition, there has been a troubling proliferation of new policies and labels to limit the distribution of sensitive but unclassified information across the Federal Government.

At the Federal level alone, there are over 28 distinct policies for the protection of this “SBU” information.

Unlike with classified records, there is no monitoring of or reporting on the use of SBU information markings or its consequences.

The proliferation of these SBU “pseudoclassifications” interferes with interagency information sharing—increasing the cost of information security and limiting public access.

It’s also an obstacle to sharing information with our first preventers and first responders in the field—precisely what the 9/11 Commission warned against.

During this session, Homeland Security’s Subcommittee on Intelligence that I chair has held numerous hearings and received invaluable input from subject matter experts on what first steps to take to address the twin problems of over- and pseudo-classification.

The bill we’re introducing today reflects that input.

The goal is simple: make the Department of Homeland Security the “gold standard” when it comes to preventing over-classification and to limiting the use of sensitive but unclassified markings.

The only way to ensure that the Department gets it right going forward is to promote an enforceable and understandable strategy that applies to everyone.

DHS is an excellent place to start and—if it gets a handle on its own burgeoning over- and pseudo-classification addiction—can become a “best practices” center and the test bed for the rest of the Federal Government.

Accordingly, our bill will require the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a strategy that will: allow the classification of documents only after unclassified, shareable versions of intelligence have been produced; develop a new “sensitive and shared” information program that will provide protections for certain sensitive and unclassified information for limited periods of time under narrowly tailored circumstances; propose new incentives and disincentives to encourage Department personnel to classify documents properly and to use “sensitive and shared” markings sparingly; create training programs and auditing mechanisms for all Department employees in order to ensure that the Strategy is being implemented properly; establish an independent Department declassification review board to expedite the declassification of documents when the need for public access outweighs the need to classify; and propose legislative solutions to ensure that the Strategy is implemented in a way that not only promotes security but also fosters both information sharing and the protection of privacy and other civil rights.

Our Subcommittee plans to move this legislation early next year and hopes our colleagues in the House will join us in the effort to ensure that the Federal Government gets accurate and actionable information to those who need it in a timely fashion.

THE 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF CONRAD AND FRANCES GASKIN

HON. MICHAEL R. McNULTY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. McNULTY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Conrad and Frances Gaskin on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Both first generation African Caribbean Americans, Conrad and Frances met in elementary school and were married on September 14, 1957 at St. Augustine Roman Catholic Church in the Bronx. Conrad served in the United States Air Force before eventually working for the New York State Teacher’s Retirement System. After receiving her doctorate from Fordham, Frances went on to found and serve as a professor for a program in nursing at the Hostos Community College at the City University of New York.

Moving to Albany in August of 1980, the Gaskins helped found an additional Church home in the Faith Community of the Black Apostolate. This later expanded to include St. Joan of Are and Sacred Heart Churches of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, where both serve as Ministers of the Eucharist.

Committed to serving the community, Conrad and Frances continued to stay active and involved after retirement. Conrad coached basketball and swimming while Frances worked for the American Red of America Cross and is a Staff Officer with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. They are blessed with three children and five grandchildren.

It is my honor to recognize Conrad and Frances Gaskin and provide my heartfelt congratulations to them on this wonderful event in their lives. I would like to extend my best wishes to the Gaskins and their family on their 50th wedding anniversary.

HONORING CPL TANNER O’LEARY

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to honor the life of CPL Tanner O’Leary, who died December 9, 2007, while serving his country in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Tanner, who was a member of the 82nd Airborne Division based in Fort Bragg, N.C., graduated from Timber Lake High School in 2003. He joined the Army in 2005. He graduated from infantry training in May 2005 and airborne school in June 2005.

The lives of countless people were enormously enhanced by Tanner’s compassion and service. He represented the best of the United States, South Dakota, and the Army. His life continues to inspire all those who knew him and many who did not. Our Nation and the State of South Dakota are far better places because of his service.

Today, we remember and honor Tanner’s noble service to the United States and the ultimate sacrifice he has paid with his life to defend our freedoms and foster liberty for others.

I would like to express my condolences to the family and friends of CPL Tanner O’Leary. His commitment to and sacrifice for our country will not be forgotten.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SANTA FE QUADRUCENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Santa Fe Quadrucentennial Commemorative Coin Act. The minting of a commemorative coin will serve as a historic national tribute to the ever-distinct City Different.

Santa Fe was officially elevated by the Spanish settlers from a plaza to a capital city in 1610 and has continued to be a meeting

place and home to all cultures ever since. Santa Fe, to this day, continues to be a government, cultural, religious, and social center. Throughout its history, it has attracted settlers, traders, artists, historians, and tourists, all coming to see what Santa Fe and the surrounding communities have to offer.

The Santa Fe area has long been home to native peoples, centuries prior to European incursions. In fact, some of the tribal communities in the area today have been there for over one thousand years. Arriving centuries later, though still over 400 years ago, the Spanish settlers were integral to the European exploration and settlement of this continent. This legislation honors both the tribal communities and Spanish settlers.

Throughout the city are structures of great historical importance. Built in the 17th Century, the Palace of the Governors was the seat of government for generations and is now the oldest continuously used public building in the United States. It currently serves as the State's history museum, ensuring that current and future generations will be able to learn about the events that shaped New Mexico's past, present, and future.

The creation of the commemorative coin will help in the preparation and celebration of this monumental quadricentennial. The proceeds from the sale of the gold five dollar and silver one dollar coins will be split, with half going towards the 400th Anniversary Committee to support programs to promote the understanding of Santa Fe and its legacies. The rest will go to the Department of Interior to ensure the preservation of Santa Fe, enhance national and international programs, and improve archaeological research activities throughout the area. These are especially important as we continue to learn more about all of the communities that have settled in the area for centuries.

I want to take a moment to thank Senators JEFF BINGAMAN and PETE DOMENICI who are working on this in the Senate, as well as co-sponsors Representatives HEATHER WILSON and STEVE PEARCE for their support here in the House. We must all work to preserve the legacy of America's first European communities and the people who came long before, and I am proud the entire delegation has joined together to mark this remarkable milestone.

For the rich blend of cultures steeped in centuries of heritage, it is only fitting that the Congress recognize the 400th anniversary of the Nation's oldest capital originally known as La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco de Asis. I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this legislation.

IN MEMORY OF HENRY PRYOR

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Henry Pryor of Camden, Arkansas, who passed away December 9, 2007, at the age of 50.

Henry Pryor was a consummate professional who made a positive impact on the people and businesses he worked with throughout his life, which was abruptly and sadly cut short

due to a tragic car accident. His career in banking took him across the United States and he eventually landed in Camden, Arkansas, where he served as Executive Vice President of Heartland Community Bank of Camden, and Senior Vice President of Farmers Bank and Trust of Camden.

Although Henry Pryor had a career in business, his calling and real passion was in community development. The City of Camden and its residents were extremely fortunate to gain from his selfless gifts of time and energy to make his community a better place to live. As a member of the Ouachita County Historical Society, he was instrumental in preserving historic properties in Camden such as the Clifton-Greening Street Historic District. He took a keen interest in seeing businesses flourish throughout Camden and Ouachita County through his service as president of the Camden Area Chamber of Commerce. In addition, he was a graduate of the Leadership Camden area program and he served on numerous area boards and commissions. As a local community leader, he also recognized the vast importance of regional festivals and the impact they had on residents and businesses, through his proud service as chairman of the Annual Camden Daffodil Festival.

I send my deepest condolences to his wife of 21 years, Angela Woodward Pryor of Camden, Arkansas, and to his numerous nephews, nieces and cousins.

Henry Pryor will be missed by his family, his church, his community and all those who knew him and called him a friend. His focus on the community and his spirit of service to others and to his community will never be forgotten. I will continue to keep his family in my deepest thoughts and prayers.

TRIBUTE TO RECIPIENTS OF THE SULLIVAN BROTHERS' AWARD OF VALOR

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize three members of the Decorah, Iowa Police Department, Chief Tom Courtney, Captain Warren Leeps, and Officer Sara Stinson, and Volunteer Decorah Firefighter Jeff Ode, as recipients of The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor for saving another's life by risking their own.

The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor Program was established in 1977 to recognize peace officers and firefighters, who while serving in an official capacity, distinguished themselves by performing a heroic act while fully aware of a threat to his/her personal safety. The strict nomination process includes background investigations, and the final determination is made by the Governor of Iowa.

In January of 2007, Olive Sims crashed her car into a ditch along Division Street in Decorah. Chief Courtney, Captain Leeps, Officer Stinson and Volunteer Firefighter Ode responded to the report and quickly traveled to the scene. Upon their arrival, they discovered the engine compartment of the vehicle was engulfed in flames and that Olive was still inside. Putting their own lives in danger, they acted quickly to remove Olive from the vehicle

before the fire department arrived and just before the passenger compartment of the car was fully consumed by fire.

Their bravery goes above and beyond what we are asked of as citizens of this country. Their courage illustrates the compassion of Iowans willing to risk their own lives for a neighbor in need. For this I offer them my utmost congratulations and thanks.

I commend Chief Tom Courtney, Captain Warren Leeps, Officer Sara Stinson and Volunteer Firefighter Jeff Ode for their bravery. I am honored to represent each of them in Congress and I wish them the best in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING ZACHARY RYAN WALSH FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachary R. Walsh, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachary has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Zachary has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commanding Zachary R. Walsh for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

UNITED STATES-CUBA CULTURAL EXCHANGE LETTER TO PRESIDENT BUSH—ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the U.S.-Cuba Cultural Exchange's letter to President Bush and to enter into the RECORD a copy of their letter.

On November 27, 2007, the U.S.-Cuba Cultural Exchange sent a letter to President Bush that expressed their desire to establish relations with Cuban artists and urged him to take steps to normalize interaction with Cuba. The letter was signed by several artists including Harry Belafonte, Danny Glover, Carlos Santana, and Sean Penn. As of December 11, 2007, the letter has been signed by one thousand four hundred and twelve people.

I applaud the U.S.-Cuba Cultural Exchange for urging President Bush to change the U.S. policy towards Cuba and for raising awareness about how the policy impacts the artist community. Further, I support their movement, which would allow people from both countries to exchange and experience performing and literary arts.