

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I was unable to have my vote recorded on the House floor on Thursday, June 12, 2008, having returned to my district to assist my constituents with the severe flooding that recently struck Wisconsin. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H. Res. 1257 (Roll No. 405 and No. 406), H. Res. 1265 (Roll No. 407 and No. 408), H.R. 1553 (Roll No. 409), H.R. 5749 (Roll No. 410 and No. 412), and S. 2146 (Roll No. 413). I would have voted against the motion to recommit H.R. 5749 (Roll No. 411).

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Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I was unable to have my vote recorded on the House floor on Wednesday, June 11, 2008, having returned to my district to assist my constituents with the severe flooding that recently struck Wisconsin. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H. Res. 977 (Roll No. 404).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I was unable to vote on Wednesday, June 11 and Thursday, June 12 due to massive flooding throughout Iowa's 1st Congressional District. Although I realize how important it is to cast votes in Washington, the well-being of my constituents comes first, and I need to be in the District to assist in any way I can.

On rollcall 397, H.R. 6003, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall 398, H.R. 6003, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 399, H.R. 6003, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall 400, H.R. 6003, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 401, H. Res. 1258, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 402, H. Res. 1235, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 403, H.R. 5749, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 404, H. Res. 977, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 405, H. Res. 1257, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 406, H. Res. 1257, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 407, H. Res. 1265, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 408, H. Res. 1265, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 409, H.R. 1553, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 410, H.R. 5749, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 411, H.R. 5749, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall 412, H.R. 5749, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall 413, S. 2146, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

IT'S TIME TO TALK TO IRAN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday of this week I had the wonderful experience of participating in a very important and worthwhile exercise in civilian diplomacy.

Coordinated by the Campaign for a New American Policy in Iran, Tuesday's event, called "Time to Talk with Iran," brought together a bipartisan gathering of Members of Congress, citizen groups, and religious organizations calling for bilateral negotiations without preconditions between the United States and Iran to dissuade Iran from seeking to acquire nuclear weapons.

Our message was simple: It is time to talk to Iran.

In fact it is past time we talk to Iran.

Because we hear the same people who supported a disastrous war of choice in Iraq now steadily beating the drum for war with Iran.

We have been down this road before and Americans have learned a simple truth from five hard and bitter years in Iraq:

No unjust war ever produced a just and lasting peace.

It has not worked in Iraq. It will not work in Iran.

We do not need another rush to unwarranted, unnecessary, and misguided military action. We need instead to launch a diplomatic surge for peace and reconciliation.

That is why earlier this year I introduced H.R. 5056, the Iran Diplomatic Accountability Act of 2008, which directs the President to appoint a high-level envoy empowered to seek to conduct direct, unconditional, bilateral negotiations with Iran for the purpose of easing tensions and normalizing relations between the United States and Iran.

My bill takes a common sense approach and it is one the American people understand.

Six out of 10 Americans do want their president to talk to Iran's president, according to the most-recent Gallup poll.

Many leading organizations active in the nuclear nonproliferation movement support this

approach as indicated by the attached letter in support of diplomatic dialogue with Iran from the Friends Committee On National Legislation, FCNL.

Foreign policy experts also support direct negotiations without preconditions. In fact, a group of 5 bipartisan former U.S. secretaries of state have called for the U.S. to open talks with Iran to find common ground and resolve differences on Iraq, Iran's nuclear program, and other issues.

They understand that the current policy of avoiding serious negotiations with Iran until Iran suspends uranium enrichment has not worked. They understand that an offer of bilateral negotiations with a precondition is essentially no offer at all, when the precondition is the object of the negotiations.

Not only is talking to Iran the most sensible approach—it is far superior to preemptive military action against Iran. We know from the misadventure in Iraq that the humanitarian, economic, political, and military consequences of military conflict with Iran would be staggering.

Simply put: this Nation cannot afford these costs—especially on top of the tremendous costs of the debacle in Iraq.

Finally, Madam Speaker, although many persons were responsible for planning this extraordinary exercise in civilian diplomacy, I would like to single out for special recognition Carah Ong of the Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation; Bill Goold, Executive Director of the Congressional Progressive Caucus; and Nicole King of my personal staff. They did a wonderful job organizing this event.

It is time to talk to Iran. As the "Time to Talk to Iran" event this past Tuesday, all it takes to begin is one "Hello."

FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON

NATIONAL LEGISLATION,

Washington, DC, June 3, 2008.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS, We write to call your attention to the recent call from five former U.S. secretaries of state for the U.S. to open talks with Iran. We urge you to speak out in favor of such talks and to support legislation to encourage them.

Colin Powell, Henry Kissinger, James Baker III, Madeleine Albright, and Warren Christopher all urged the U.S. to open a dialogue with Iran to find common ground and resolve differences on Iraq, Iran's nuclear program, and other issues.

The administration's policy of avoiding serious negotiations with Iran until Iran suspends uranium enrichment has not worked. We agree with those in Congress and elsewhere who have argued that to offer bilateral negotiations with a precondition is no offer at all, especially when the precondition is the object of the negotiations. This position guarantees that the negotiations with the best chance of settling U.S.-Iran differences will not begin.

Former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski and the late former National Security Agency director William Odom wrote recently that "Current U.S. policy toward the regime in Tehran will almost certainly result in an Iran with nuclear weapons." They and many other analysts have concluded that U.S. military action against Iran would only delay an Iranian nuclear weapons program and insure their determination to acquire nuclear weapons. Extreme elements would be strengthened and the cause of reform in Iran would be set back for years to come. Military action would also increase animosity toward the U.S. in the Middle East and elsewhere. It would prompt a big spike in the price of oil and would likely lead to retaliatory actions against the U.S. in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Current U.S. policy not to seriously negotiate with Iran has failed. The absence of talks and the addition of ever more stringent economic sanctions will resolve nothing. Military action would be disastrous. The only sensible option that serves the interests of the U.S. and the nations of the Middle East is to explore the possibility of finding common ground with Iran through direct negotiations. Common ground is not hard to imagine. For starters, both countries have an interest in a stable Iraq, a Taliban-free Afghanistan, and increased oil production capacity in Iran. The U.S. need not wait to develop leverage.

Please add your voice to those of the five former U.S. secretaries of state and other senior figures who are urging the U.S. to open talks with Iran. And please look for legislative opportunities to put Congress on record in support of such talks.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

JIM FINE,
Legislative Secretary for Foreign Policy.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF JO-ANN LOFTUS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a wonderful woman; Jo-Ann Loftus is retiring from the New York Stock Exchange after being a dedicated employee for the past 34 years.

Jo-Ann has proven herself to be a dedicated and relentlessly hardworking employee. Starting out as a secretary, Jo-Ann has worked her way up to become manager of the Government Relations department. In her many years of employment there, Jo-Ann has touched many lives at the NYSE.

Jo-Ann is also the mother of two children and would be described by them as supportive, loving and full of life and integrity. Jo-Ann raised her children as a single mother, working full time and putting both through college on her own. She has also never missed one dance recital, baseball game, after-school event or award ceremony that her children have been involved in.

Jo-Ann is also the founder of His Final Touch Prayer group and has been the faithful leader for over a decade. Jo-Ann is also a very involved member of her local Catholic parish and community.

She will be very missed by her colleagues and friends at the New York Stock Exchange but they are very confident that she will be just as successful at retirement as she has been in her years of work and service there.

THE NATIONAL NANOTECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2008

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, on June 5, 2008, I voted for the nanotechnology bill (H.R. 5940).

I have often expressed my concerns regarding the social, legal and ethical implications of

"engineered intelligence", that is, the ongoing efforts of computer engineers and bio-engineers to create intelligence beyond that of a human being. The Congress and the Administration need to consider and address all aspects of these issues as we promote and assist the development of nanotechnology. To that end, I am pleased that this bill provides for a triennial review by the National Research Council of the adequacy of the National Nanotechnology Program's activities addressing ethical, legal, environmental, and other appropriate societal concerns, including human health concerns.

I hope that these concerns will receive even further attention in the legislative process as this bill goes to Senate and as any Senate reports or conference reports on a nanotechnology bill are prepared.

A TRIBUTE TO CLARENCE E. KOONACE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Clarence E. Koonace, who helps serve his community through developing innovative medical technology. Before his career as an engineer, Koonace served his country as a member of the United States Air Force.

Mr. Koonace obtained a degree in business administration from Farleigh Dickerson's Edward Williams School and an Electronic Engineering Degree from DeVry Institute. On July 1, 1986, Clarence founded the Mordenrn Rad Ltd. Koonace's organization, provides sales and service to medical imaging cliental including NYC Fire Department's medical Division and NYC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, private clinics, private practices, and consultation to vendors of X-ray equipment.

In addition to his career in engineering, Koonace is also an ordained deacon and member of Liberty Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York. He is the husband to Evon Koonace and the father to two children, Crystal Bonita and Trevor Lamont.

It is with great honor that I recognize Koonace today for his service in improving health care technology and improving the lives of others.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN SALOGUB

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of John Salogub, an active citizen of the Carnarsie neighborhood of Brooklyn and president of the 69th Precinct Community Council.

In addition to his work with the 69th Precinct Community, John is an active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 59 and American Legion Post 573; indeed, John is a military veteran and served his country from October 1967 through May 1971.

John attended New York City Public Schools PS114 and IS211.

It is with great honor that I recognize John Salogub for his commitment to Brooklyn and service to his country.

HONORING THE LIFE AND WORK OF MAYOR BOB BLANCHARD

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to recognize the passing of a valued colleague, Santa Rosa Mayor Bob Blanchard. Mayor Blanchard died June 14, 2008, at the age of 70, leaving a hole in the heart of his community and his family. He will be long remembered for his good humor, enthusiasm, and commitment to the city he loved.

Twenty-seven years ago, Bob and his family moved to Santa Rosa from southern California. He and his wife Angelyn raised their two children, daughter Cameron and son Matt, in the city, where they appreciated the quality of life it offers to families. It was his dedication to ensuring this quality for future generations that led Bob into public service.

After serving a stint in the Army, Bob had worked as a deputy sheriff in Riverside County as well as teaching at Riverside Community College. In 1978, he earned a doctorate in government, and his career shifted toward administration and teaching in the field of criminal justice and political science. This direction led to his move to Santa Rosa to serve as the director of Santa Rosa Junior College, SRJC, Police and Fire Academy. He eventually became a dean and a political science instructor at SRJC where he enjoyed working with young people. Although he had retired as a member of the regular faculty, Bob had stayed involved as an adjunct instructor.

Bob was also a founder of Tomorrow's Leader Today, a program that prepares high school juniors to be community leaders. He is remembered for his warmth and humor in inspiring the teenagers to be their best.

In 1994, Bob was appointed to the Santa Rosa Planning Commission, serving until his election to the City Council in 2002. He was re-elected in 2006 and then selected by his council colleagues to serve as mayor.

Bob and I have not always agreed on issues, but his ability to work with all sides to address concerns facing the city of Santa Rosa made him a leader for all and a spokesman on important issues such as transportation, outreach to diverse communities, public safety, and boosting the city whenever and wherever he could. He always endeavored to forge an appropriate compromise with the same humor and good spirit that characterized all his relationships.

"Work" is the operative word for Bob. Despite his off-and-on battle with cancer, he maintained a heavy work load, representing the community to the best of his ability and never losing his enthusiasm. During this time he traveled to Santa Rosa Sister Cities in Korea and Mexico and was instrumental in helping the city earn a designation as All America City.

In addition to Angelyn, his wife of 41 years, and his two children, Bob is survived by two grandchildren.