

With its close proximity to downtown Chicago and the major commercial centers surrounding O'Hare airport, Hanover Park represents the perfect blend between urban dynamism and suburban life.

Hanover Park also boasts the youngest average resident population in the Northern suburbs. Its multitude of parks, sporting venues, and youth and family friendly activities make this a great place to work, live, and raise a family.

The spirit of Hanover Park's citizens is matched only by the industriousness of its business community. From small entrepreneurial endeavors to Fortune 500 companies, Hanover Park's economy is thriving. This impressive economy owes its prosperity to both the hardworking residents, the Village President Rodney Craig, and Hanover Park Board of Trustees to promote new business tax incentives and champion economic development. For over half of a century, the Village of Hanover Park has been a thriving community.

Madam Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in recognizing the outstanding contributions of Hanover Park, Illinois on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

CELEBRATING THE ALEXANDRIA MARDI GRAS ASSOCIATION

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Alexandria Mardi Gras Association.

On March 3, 1994, the 295th Anniversary of the Founding of Louisiana by Iberville, the Alexandria Mardi Gras Association was officially established. The goal of Alexandria Mardi Gras, or Mardi Gras au Coeur de la Louisianne, which means Mardi Gras in the Heart of Central Louisiana, is to exemplify unity and cohesiveness during family friendly festivities.

This year during Alexandria's 15th Anniversary Mardi Gras, Julie Hanna, renowned conservationist is representing the Jack Hanna family as Grand Marshal. The Alexandria Zoo, nationally recognized for breeding Bengal tigers and other endangered species, is a major collaborator in advancing education and tourism during the Mardi Gras celebrations.

The 2008 College Cheerleaders and Classic Cars Parade on Friday, February 1, 2008 will feature many of Louisiana's colleges and universities and their student government presidents during an educational leadership conference. In addition, a select number of LSU football players, who recently became the 2007 National Champions, are participating in Alexandria's Family Friendly Mardi Gras as well as players from the 2003 National Championship team. The celebrated bands of Southern University and Grambling University will perform designating Alexandria as the only Mardi Gras Parade in which both bands are featured.

Among other Alexandria events during the Mardi Gras season the Krewe of LOUISIANA is hosting its Third Annual Gala in order to foster its goal of enhancing economic development and unifying Louisiana's interests. Also, The Taste of Mardi Gras is again hosting its

local charity fundraiser naming the Louisiana Restaurant Association, Chapter Cenla as the sponsor.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the citizens of Alexandria for their continued hard work and dedication to ensure that Mardi Gras in Central Louisiana retains the charm and spirit of the first official celebration 15 years prior.

RECOGNIZING WES TURNER FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF FORT WORTH, TEXAS THROUGH HIS WORK AT THE FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Fort Worth Star-Telegram President and Publisher Mr. Wes Turner. After more than two decades with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Mr. Turner has retired.

Mr. Turner began his career at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram in 1975 and rose through the ranks to become the Vice President of Advertising. From 1987 through 1997, he was at various newspapers before returning to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram as Publisher.

While at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Mr. Turner devoted his career to ensure that the people of Fort Worth were properly informed about the world around them. I know his readers thank him for his efforts.

Besides his work with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Mr. Turner is very active in his community. He serves on the boards of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Performing Arts Fort Worth and the Longhorn Council-Boy Scouts of America Foundation. He is Vice Chairman of the Van Cliburn Foundation and Campaign Chairman for the United Way of Tarrant County.

Even though Mr. Turner has completed his work at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, we can all be thankful that he will maintain his commitment to the city of Fort Worth by continuing with his other community service endeavors.

I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Wes Turner on his retirement. His dedication and commitment to providing the truth to the citizens of Fort Worth made us all lead better lives. It is an honor to represent citizens like Mr. Turner in the 26th Congressional District of Texas.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT M. BALL

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Robert M. Ball, a great man who lived a life dedicated to serving the American people. Mr. Ball passed away last week at the age of 93, but we will forever be indebted to the legacy he leaves for us through his lifetime of commitment to the social insurance programs of Social Security and Medicare that

allow us to provide for the elderly and people with disabilities and their families.

Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues in extending my condolences to the Ball family, his wife Doris, his children Jonathan and Jacqueline, and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Born in Harlem and raised in Boston and New Jersey, Mr. Ball was the youngest in a family led by Methodist ministers who taught him the social gospel. He was educated at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, where he received a master's in labor economics. Even as a teenaged boy, Mr. Ball felt a calling to contribute to something greater than himself. As his biographer Professor Daniel Berkowitz wrote in *Robert Ball and the Politics of Social Security*, Mr. Ball indicated that he wanted to become a "person of consequence." Considering his contributions to Social Security and Medicare, he certainly lived up to his hopes for himself.

After taking a Federal civil service exam, Mr. Ball was called up to work for the newly forming Social Security Board as a field assistant in Newark, New Jersey in 1939. He joined Social Security and immediately understood that Social Security was a contract between generations that ensured that today's workers would provide for today's retired seniors so that they may avoid the indignities of abject poverty. He saw his job in support of this new social insurance program as part of something greater. Mr. Ball helped build Social Security from the ground up. As a field assistant in Newark, he was bringing workers into the program, spreading the news about the value of social insurance several years before the first benefit was even paid in 1942.

His next position in the new Social Security headquarters in Baltimore allowed him to fully engage with his primary interests: the philosophy of the program, the legislative agenda, and where the whole program was going. Mr. Ball grew to know the program intimately. He developed a deep technical expertise in Social Security, and he also grew to know Congress and how it works. He was soon able to provide legislators with what they needed to govern and oversee the Social Security programs responsibly and effectively. Mr. Ball became so familiar with the work of the Committee on Ways and Means, that he was seen by Members as an extension of their congressional staff.

Mr. Ball's career is intertwined with the history of Social Security and he played a key role in every major policy development. He was the architect of the 1950 amendments, which raised benefits and expanded coverage to more Americans. He helped implement the disability insurance program beginning in 1956. He orchestrated the developments that produced the 1972 amendments that linked benefits to inflation, ensuring that Social Security would never fail to meet basic needs.

In what was seen as a natural assumption, he was appointed by President John F. Kennedy as Commissioner in 1962, a post in which he diligently served longer than anyone else prior or since. He is regarded by many as the father of Medicare, as he shepherded the Federal Government through the development and implementation of that program.

In 1987, Yale School of Management Professor Ted Marmor, who began his career as an intern under Mr. Ball's superiors, wrote this description of Robert Ball. I think it captures

the quiet and competent strength of the man quite well:

Ball, six feet one inch, is a white-haired, broad-shouldered man whose gravity is lightened by a readily available twinkle and chuckle. He wears black-rimmed, prominent glasses that he takes on and off when shifting from speaking to reading. His expression is frequently softened by his easy smile and firm but unaggressive manner. At meetings he leans forward intently in his seat and, with a formalism that seems now a little old-fashioned, begins to speak in a manner instilled by years of testifying before Congress: 'Mr. Chairman, let me begin by stating that I am in full agreement with the general thrust of Mr. X's remarks. But I would like, if I may, to bring up three somewhat technical points about social security. . . .' Ball could have posed for pictures of executive presence in *Fortune* during the 1950s and 1960s. But in Bob Ball's case, the imagery captures much of the man, not a myth. Ball did indeed come to stand for the SSA and its reputation for honest, competent, reliable service to Americans, who were regarded as clients, not supplicants.

Even after retirement as Commissioner in 1973, Mr. Ball was often relied upon by policymakers and Presidents as a key advisor on Social Security and Medicare. An aide to President Jimmy Carter deemed him to be one of the "high priests of Social Security."

When the financing arrangements for Social Security needed to be reformed, he was appointed by President Reagan to a commission to recommend a plan of action to ensure the program's long-term fiscal health. In that role, Mr. Ball unexpectedly salvaged negotiations that had been stymied by partisan bickering and produced the deal that saved Social Security in 1983.

As the Founding Chair of the National Academy of Social Insurance, Mr. Ball helped create in 1986 what has grown to be an organization of over 800 policy experts dedicated to helping Americans better understand the role that social insurance programs play in our lives through research, leadership development programs, and forums for exchange of ideas for issues in the field.

Well into his retirement, Mr. Ball continued to defend Social Security from ideological challenges such as efforts to privatize the system and undermine the very purpose of social insurance. Last fall, he reminded us in a piece in the *New York Times* that without Social Security as designed, 13 million more seniors, one million more children, and 55 percent of people with disabilities would live in poverty today.

As a chief architect of the 1983 reforms, and someone who knew the program from the inside out, he also reminded us that the prescription for Social Security's long-term fiscal health should not result in further reductions in benefits, which are already declining in value primarily because of the increasing cost of health care and Medicare premiums. In that October piece in the *New York Times*, he wrote that "Social Security is the nation's most effective anti-poverty program. But it's much more than that. For every worker it provides a solid base on which to try to build an adequate level of retirement income. To weaken that foundation would be grossly irresponsible."

I will certainly heed his advice. Policymakers who ignore him do so at their own peril, because when it comes to Social Security, Robert Ball knew what he was talking about.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD votes I would have cast had I been present for rollcall votes 29 through 31. I was absent on Wednesday, February 6th due to familial obligations.

If I were present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 29, "yea" on rollcall vote 30, and "yea" on rollcall vote 31.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. AND MRS. JOHNNY CLIFTON

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I would like to request the House's attention to pay recognition to a special day in the lives of two constituents of mine, Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Clifton.

On February 14, Johnny and Judy Clifton will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. To help commemorate this special occasion, the couple will gather with friends and family at the First United Methodist Church of Saks, Alabama on February 9.

Johnny and Judy have raised two children, Malea and Brian, and have four grandchildren, Katie, Whitney, Nathan and Aria. Johnny is an Etowah County native, who served with distinction as an Alabama State Trooper and as a sergeant with the Alabama Bureau of Investigation. Judy grew up in Anniston, and retired from AmSouth Bank after 24 years of service and remains active in the community.

I would like to congratulate Johnny and Judy on reaching this important milestone in their lives. I wish them and their family the best in the future.

INTRODUCTION OF "FUTA SURTAX REPEAL ACT"

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, employers across our country contribute a portion of their payroll on a per employee basis to pay for the potential future unemployment benefits of their workers. In a very real sense, this payment—required by law—represents a trade-off for workers, where the tax is paid at the expense of workers today, who would otherwise currently be receiving higher wages or more opportunities for work. If paid to workers directly, they could spend or save it as they wished. Still, our government has decided that this tax is an important investment that must be made on behalf of an employee in case the business falls on hard times and resorts to layoffs.

It works like this: under the provisions of the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA), employers pay an extra 0.6 percent on the first

\$7,000 of payroll per employee in Federal unemployment taxes. Depending on the size of a company and the number of workers on payroll, these extra taxes can add up and affect decisions to invest in new equipment, hire workers, retain employees or even pay more in wages. Back in the 1970s, Congress faced an unusual shortfall in the trust funds that hold unemployment taxes, so it decided to levy an additional 0.2 percent surtax on employers, known as the FUTA surtax. Again, as employers paid more in non-wage benefits, the wages of employees suffered by this same amount. This meant that the previous payroll tax contribution for Federal unemployment was raised from 0.6 percent to 0.8 percent. While 0.2 percent may not seem like a significant imposition, over the decade this 25 percent increase in the overall unemployment tax restored a sound financial footing to the trust funds.

But the surtax didn't go away. Since it was no longer needed, after the 1980s, the FUTA surtax has been repeatedly extended—most recently in December 2007—and used as an extra source of tax revenue for Congress to spend on other unrelated programs. In other words, as the House and Senate expand Federal programs, the American wage payer is literally picking up the tab in a form that conveniently doesn't show up as an increased income tax burden. Today, the Federal unemployment insurance trust funds have about \$35 billion more than they need, making the additional \$1.5 billion per year brought in through the FUTA surtax totally unnecessary. Even without the surtax, the standard unemployment tax on employers brings in more than enough money to support the current Federal responsibilities, without even tapping the \$35 billion in the trust funds. In fact, the outstanding balances in the Federal accounts are about six to seven times the annual cost of the unemployment program, leaving plenty of room for a "rainy day" reserve.

My legislation would repeal the FUTA surtax for once and for all. As our Nation's economy and workers face uncertain times, rolling back the FUTA surtax would provide new flexibility to employers at just the right time—enabling a stronger and more prosperous workforce.

HONORING THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CONNY B. McCORMACK, LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Conny B. McCormack, an outstanding Californian, who has recently retired from 30 years of public service, the last 12 as Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk.

Mrs. McCormack is the epitome of the competent, capable, dedicated public servant. Her career accomplished many noteworthy positions before she came to Los Angeles County. As the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, Mrs. McCormack has met with great success. Her Registrar of Voters duties saw her conduct elections in 88 cities, 100 school districts, and 149 special districts for roughly 4 million voters across 5,000