

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

precincts. Her duties as Recorder/County Clerk included maintaining birth, death and marriage records for a county of nearly 10 million people and recording and filing countless property documents and statutory oaths. Her office maintained over 200 million documents, a volume exceeded only by the Social Security Administration and the Pentagon. Mrs. McCormack, a great innovator, implemented the InkaVote Plus voting system, to guide voters through casting their ballots correctly and make voting easier for the disabled, and launched a new Enterprise Recording Archive system that eliminated manual processes to increase efficiency and cut down the use of paper.

Mrs. McCormack embodies the characteristics of a highly respected public servant, humble, lovable, spirited, renowned for her skills in the kitchen, a lover of outdoors gardening, hiking, and playing with her adopted canines from the L.A. County animal shelter. Mrs. McCormack is a great role model for our young women and a workers' advocate who helped support numerous student and clerical training programs. She has participated in many charities, from the Christmas Angel Tree Program for local low income children to Aids Walk Los Angeles to victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Conny has been an exemplary public servant known throughout her field for her dedication to her position, for her honesty, and for her integrity in her zeal to protect voters. A lifetime workaholic, an avid recycler, a true bargain hunter, a continual multi-tasker.

Madam Speaker. I proudly ask you to join me, her family, friends, and community in honoring Conny McCormack for her service in, and contributions to, the County of Los Angeles and other communities across the country.

IN RECOGNITION OF AARP'S
ETHEL PERCY ANDRUS LEGACY
AWARD BEING GIVEN TO ABRAHAM
LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today and acknowledge a special honor that is being bestowed on Abraham Lincoln High School in Los Angeles, within the 31st Congressional District that I am proud to serve.

Performing arts will once again flourish at Abraham Lincoln High School after many years of absence, thanks to a generous Ethel Percy Andrus Legacy Award from AARP. This grant recognizes the founding of AARP in 1958 by Dr. Andrus, who served as principal of Lincoln High School from 1916–1944.

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration in 2008, AARP is awarding more than \$1 million in Ethel Percy Andrus Legacy Awards to recognize excellence and innovation in education at high schools nationwide. The first of these awards will reinvigorate the performing arts program at Abraham Lincoln High School—connecting the high school's heritage of achievement with its very bright future.

On February 8, 2008, representatives of AARP, the city of Los Angeles, and the State of California will gather at Lincoln High to

dedicate a plaque at the new Ethel Percy Andrus Performing Arts Center. This center will enable students to receive pre-professional training in music, dance, theater and other performing arts.

The school will also enjoy the support of many AARP volunteers who will contribute their time and efforts in bringing the school's new performing arts center to life. These volunteers will continue the strong legacy established by Dr. Andrus of connecting all generations to work for the greater good of the community.

The more one learns about Dr. Andrus and her background and deeds . . . the more one marvels about her accomplishments and vision. In 1916, Dr. Andrus became California's first female high school principal when she was invited to head the faculty and staff of the former East Los Angeles High School. She renamed the school "Abraham Lincoln High School" to help inspire her students. The community represented a broad range of ethnicities and races—32 languages were spoken in students' homes and most families were low-income.

Dr. Andrus held her students and teachers to high academic standards. She believed in promoting creativity and fun, and fostered dances, plays, and musical performances to encourage them to pursue their creative talents, while also breaking down the barriers between students' cultures and backgrounds. She also set out to pull the community and the school together, involving parents and local organizations in many ways. At the time, extracurricular activities were rare. Where they did exist, they were considered frills of little value. Working against this bias, Dr. Andrus involved Lincoln's students in serving the community. Students worked in hospitals as nurses' aides, ran errands for shut-in residents, supervised playground activities for younger children, and formed art classes to make posters for local events.

She retired from teaching in 1944 in order to care for her ailing mother. After getting involved with the California Retired Teachers Association, Dr. Andrus was shocked to realize that so many retired educators were financially struggling because of inadequate income and health care. She established the National Retired Teachers Association in 1947 to give them a national voice, and established the first nationwide group health insurance program for its members.

In 1958, she established the nonprofit, non-partisan organization now known as AARP so that people at mid-life and older could enjoy independence, dignity and purpose as they aged. Since its founding, AARP's motto has been "To serve, not to be served." Since its founding, AARP has grown to more than 39 million members with more than 3.3 million members in California alone.

Ethel Percy Andrus passed away in July, 1967, but her legacy lives on in countless ways. I am pleased that one very special way that she lives on will be in the songs and dances of the students at Abraham Lincoln High School. I have no doubt she will be checking in on their progress from time to time and rejoicing in their talents!

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Whatever you are, be a good one." Ethel Percy Andrus embodied this clear bold statement and the students at this school carrying his name, and all of us, should also rise to this challenge. Each of us can make a difference.

I congratulate James Molina, principal of Abraham Lincoln High School, and the students and parents of this fine school, and commend AARP for giving students fresh opportunities to grow academically, creatively and personally—sharing their "Lincoln spirit" with a nation and a world that needs their intelligence, commitment and idealism.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE
OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 942.

As an original co-sponsor of this resolution, I am proud to join my colleagues in recognizing the month of February as Black History Month. I would like to thank my friend and colleague from Texas, Congressman AL GREEN for introducing this very important resolution.

As we recognize Black History Month, I would also like to note, that we feel the loss of our dear friends and CBC colleagues who passed away over the last year: Congresswomen Julia Carson, Juanita Millender McDonald and founding CBC member former Congressman 'Gus' Hawkins. They always joined in on the celebrations. We truly miss them, but their accomplishments live on as a part of Black History and beyond.

As First Vice-Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. I want to take a moment to commemorate Black History Month by advocating for a greater commitment to the domestic and global HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Under funding for the Minority AIDS Initiative and with our domestic HIV/AIDS programs flat-lining, data shows communities of color are increasingly bearing the brunt of the disease. Over 188,000 African-Americans were living with AIDS at the end of 2005, representing 44 percent of all cases in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In order to raise awareness. I introduced H. Con. Res. 280 to recognize and support the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and encourages state and local governments, public health agencies and the media to emphasize and publicize the importance of this day among the African American community, and all communities. Celebrated each year on February 7th, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day encourages African Americans and all Americans to "Get Educated, Get Involved, and Get Tested."

Though we recognize Black History Month this month, it is our duty to pursue policies of social justice that are fair, sustainable, and that help the most disadvantaged in our society. As an African American woman and legislator in this era of tremendous change, I am doubly aware of the obligations that we have as a community and as a country, and Black History Month and the celebration of African American involvement.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that during this Black History Month, I will continue to work with the CBC and Congress to identify bipartisan solutions to eradicate HIV/AIDS in our nation and abroad.