

I thank the National Trust for Historic Preservation for honoring Fort Davis this year, and I further extend my gratitude and congratulations to the community of Fort Davis for its dedication to preserving its historic fabric and spirit.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 31, H. Res. 943, remembering the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster and honoring its crew members, who lost their lives on January 28, 1986. I was absent due to inclement weather grounding flights from Wisconsin.

Had I been present, I would have voted "Aye".

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF PAUL J. ABBATE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the life and service of Paul J. Abbate, former Guam Superior Court Presiding Judge. Judge Abbate passed away on Saturday, February 2, 2008 in Pomfret, Maryland at the age of 88.

Judge Abbate served our Nation as a Commander in the U.S. Navy's Judge Advocate General Corps for over 20 years. Upon his retirement from the Navy, he accepted an appointment by Governor of Guam Manuel F.L. Guerrero to be the Attorney General of Guam. With the retirement of Presiding Judge Joaquin C. Perez in 1969, Governor Guerrero appointed Paul Abbate to serve as a Judge for the Superior Court of Guam, where he served for 19 years, 13 of which were as the Presiding Judge. As Presiding Judge, he initiated plans for the construction of the new Guam Judicial Center, the complex that today houses the Superior Court and Supreme Courts of Guam. Judge Abbate was noted for his well-reasoned rulings, but also for his fairness and impartiality in the court. Following his retirement from Guam's judicial system, he served as Director of Governor Joseph Washington Liaison Office in Washington, DC.

Judge Abbate's service to Guam was evident in more than just the courtroom. He committed his life to the Catholic Church as a deacon for the Archdiocese of Hagåtña and in his church in the mainland. He assisted in the major renovations and improvements to the Dulce Nombre de María Cathedral Basilica in Guam's capital of Hagåtña and helped in the preparations for the visit of Pope John Paul II on March 1, 1981.

On behalf of the people of Guam, I extend our sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to his son Michael S. Abbate and his wife Cindy, his daughter Maria T. Rossi and her husband, John, his six grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Judge Abbate will always be remembered by the people of Guam as a dedicated member of the legal commu-

nity and a devoted member of the Guam's Catholic community.

IN RESPONSE TO ATTACKS ON THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE 9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss an unwarranted and downright hostile attack on my constituents and the people of Berkeley, CA by Republicans on the floor of the House earlier today. I'm here tonight, Mr. Speaker, to set the record straight and to respond to their false claims and distortions.

Madam Speaker, it never ceases to amaze me how some people will go to any length to score political points. That is what happened here on the House floor earlier today when several Republican members said they wanted to strip the people of Berkeley, CA of much-needed Federal funding.

Let us be clear: punishing the people of Berkeley for political gain is unfair and simply plain wrong. This is nothing more than grandstanding and posturing on behalf of Republicans who want to make a political point for their own benefit.

I want to begin by talking about the primary target of the Republican campaign against the people of Berkeley, and in this case, the children of Berkeley. Republicans claimed that one earmark was for the creation of organic school lunches in the Berkeley School District. This characterization of a school lunch initiative developed by the Chez Panisse Foundation is dishonest.

This school lunch initiative aims to revolutionize school lunch by treating lunch as an important part of the day, as well as integrating lessons about wellness, sustainability and nutrition into the academic curriculum.

The funding will aid in the development of a program that would treat lunch as an academic subject for all public school students in the district, from kindergarten through high school. These funds will support a comprehensive approach to improved health and health education in the public schools that will empower students with a sense of responsibility for themselves and their health. It's about nutrition for our children.

Next I want to talk about their efforts to attack the University of California and the memory of a great leader in this body, former Congressman Bob Matsui. This funding will be used for UC Berkeley's Institute of Government Studies for the creation of the Matsui Center for Politics and Public Service.

The Matsui Center will develop a curriculum that will encourage students to think about politics and public service not as separate activities, but as a continuum of civic engagement. As a great public university, Berkeley has a special obligation to train the next generation of leaders, as well as to help them develop the political and policy skills that will enable them to participate constructively in public life. The program will also have educational components in Sacramento and Washington, DC—capitol cities which were touchstones for Congressman Bob Matsui's long public service career. It's about education.

Now allow me to turn my attention to an item that the Republicans did not want to tell you about—funding for the disabled and the Ed Roberts Campus. This funding will be used for the construction of the Ed Roberts Campus at the Ashby BART Station in Berkeley. The Ed Roberts Campus is the vision of eight disability organizations in California which have joined forces to create a multi-tenant facility. The facility will serve as an intermodal transit center, as well as a transportation information and travel-training center for seniors and people with disabilities.

It will provide services in a fully accessible, technologically-advanced environment located at BART's Ashby stop. The campus will serve approximately 2,000 disabled people per week, most of whom will arrive by public transportation.

The Ed Roberts Campus is an innovative approach to transit oriented development and will be the first disability service center at a major fully-accessible transit hub. As a result, people throughout the region will have access to programs that will enable them to obtain needed health care education, job training and other services in order to achieve their life and work goals. It's about providing quality services for the disabled!

Finally, I want to mention another item that the Republican supporters of this measure will not mention—that their bill would intentionally undermine the safety and security of the people of Berkeley by denying critical funding for Berkeley public safety agencies' interoperability.

This particular funding will be used to update Berkeley's public safety computer dispatch and communications system to ensure systems interoperability. It will support critical inter-jurisdictional communications and coordination needs. This funding will help to enhance Berkeley's ability to maintain a secure and interoperable computer and communications system and maximize sustainable use after a natural or human made disaster. It's about public safety!

Madam Speaker, the statements by Republicans on the floor of the House earlier today were nothing but a shameful attack on my constituents in order to score perceived political points. It is just plain wrong and it is a real shame that it is happening on the floor of this House.

I have said it before and I will say it again, I will fight to defend the constituents of my district and their right to receive Federal funds.

ON THE LIFE OF VI STOIA

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, today I would like to offer a special remembrance for a unique individual, Vi Stoia. Viorel G. "Vi" Stoia was born in Aberdeen, South Dakota in 1924. He lived there all of his life, save for when he attended the University of Minnesota earning his degree in business administration, and when he served in the United States Navy from 1942 to 1946 as a Chief Petty Officer. Vi married Donna Marie Maurseth in 1949 and they made their home in Aberdeen, raising their five children—Marsha, Nancy, Greg, James and Thomas.

Vi served on countless boards, was a member of numerous civic associations, and was Aberdeen's resident historian, well-known and well-liked throughout the community. He learned everything he could about area projects and economic development issues, and maintained both a mental and physical archive of the town's history. If you had a question about something in Aberdeen's history, not only would Vi know the answer, he would most likely be able to produce a newspaper article about it. His clippings archives went back at least 60 years, if not more.

As a constant supporter of the Aberdeen community, Vi was involved in almost every opportunity for economic growth or quality-of-life improvement. He advocated for public projects as diverse as the Northeast Regional Health and Fitness Center, the Highway 12 Expressway and Moccasin Creek revitalization. When incentives for business recruitment and expansion were being sought, Vi was there to lead the charge.

Though he was a very successful businessman, as senior financial representative with Northwestern Mutual Life, and held many leadership positions within the insurance industry, it was his public service and influence within the community that will be remembered most.

I join the Aberdeen community, Vi's family, and friends, not in mourning his passing, but in celebrating his life and the innumerable contributions he made to the community of which he was so proud.

HOLT NURSING SCHOOL CAPACITY AMENDMENT TO COLLEGE OP- PORTUNITY AND AFFORD- ABILITY

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, nurses are the backbone of our health care system. The shortage of nurses throughout our country leaves patients unattended, doctors stressed, and nurses exhausted from extra shifts. A principle reason for this shortage of nurses is the shortage of nursing school faculty. Because of the faculty shortage many schools of nursing are turning away good students who would make good nurses.

I am pleased that my amendment which attaches the Nursing School Capacity Act, H.R. 677, to the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007 (H.R. 4137) has been accepted in the bill passed in the House. I thank Representative WELCH and Representative CAPPS, one of the Co-Chairs of the House Nursing Caucus, for cosponsoring this amendment with me. H.R. 677, which has 76 cosponsors, directs the Institute of Medicine to study the constraints experienced by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating enough nurses to meet growing needs.

I appreciate that House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Miller accepted our amendment and incorporated it into his Manager's Amendment. Today's action shows that Congress understands the healthcare crisis facing states like New Jersey.

The study my amendment directs will explore the constraints that our nation's schools

of nursing face and propose short and long term solutions to address the nursing crisis. I look forward to reviewing the study's recommendations and working to implement them before the quality of care suffers.

Over the years, I have heard from many nursing professionals from New Jersey about the nursing crisis, particularly the inability of nursing schools to meet growing workforce demands. In fact, a study from the National League of Nursing states that in 2004, nursing schools were forced to turn down 147,000 qualified applicants due to a lack of faculty. That is why I first introduced the Nursing School Capacity Act three years ago, and why I am excited that it's close to becoming law today.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the American Nurses Association, the American Organization of Nurse Executives and the New Jersey Hospital Association all endorsed the legislation. I ask unanimous consent that their endorsement letters be included in the RECORD.

We have not solved the nursing crisis with today's action, but we have taken a step in better understanding the problem.

FEBRUARY 4, 2008.

Hon. RUSH HOLT,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE HOLT: On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and the American Nurses Association, we would like to thank you for offering the language included in the Nursing School Capacity Act of 2007 (H.R. 677) as an amendment to the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007 (H.R. 4137).

Over the past decade, the inability to increase the supply of nurses has become more apparent as the challenges faced by nursing education programs have intensified. These challenges force schools of nursing to turn away thousands of qualified applicants each year. According to a 2006 AACN report, U.S. nursing schools turned away 42,866 qualified applicants due to an insufficient number of faculty, clinical sites, classroom space, clinical preceptors, and budget constraints. Almost three quarters of the nursing schools responding to AACN's survey pointed to faculty shortages as a primary reason for not accepting all qualified applicants into nursing programs. A Special Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions released by AACN in July 2007, reported a total of 767 faculty vacancies (8.8 percent vacancy rate) identified at 329 nursing schools with baccalaureate and/or graduate programs across the country.

Clearly, the obstacles faced by schools of nursing in attempting to increase enrollment and graduations are vastly complex and warrant further investigation. Your bill will facilitate the discussion of these constraints and help explore solutions to overcome the barriers that are preventing potential students from entering the nursing profession. In addition, your bill calls for recommendations to be made by the Institute of Medicine which will serve as a valuable resource for policy-makers as well as the health, industry, and education systems.

AACN and ANA sincerely appreciate your willingness to thoroughly investigate the nursing and nurse faculty shortage through the Nursing School Capacity Act.

Sincerely,

American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

American Nurses Association.

AMERICAN ORGANIZATION OF
NURSE EXECUTIVES,

Washington, DC, February 4, 2008.

Hon. RUSH HOLT,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HOLT: On behalf of the over 6000 members of the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) representing nurses in all facets of executive practice, we would like to express our strong support for the amendment that you and Representative Welch are prepared to offer to H.R. 4147 the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007. The amendment incorporates the language of your bill H.R. 677, the Nursing School Capacity Act into a more comprehensive piece of legislation and would provide the nursing and health care communities with important research into the underlying causes of the nursing shortage.

The majority of AONE's membership of registered professional nurses are leaders in the day-to-day management and delivery of direct patient care services. In this position, we have been able to see first hand the impacts of the worsening nursing shortage and applaud your efforts to address this critical situation through the provision of study to be conducted by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. Understanding that the nursing shortage is the result of the convergence of a number of factors, your proposed legislation would identify the constraints encountered by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating the number of registered nurses to ensure patient safety but it would also propose recommendations to alleviate the constraints on a short-term and long-term basis.

AONE has been in the forefront of attempts to deal with the nursing shortage and welcomes the opportunity to participate in the proposed study as a consultant in partnership with the other relevant organizations named in your legislation. AONE has focused on the work environment and the educational preparation of the nurse of the future. We see our past and current work as integral to the study you have proposed. Your legislation provides a comprehensive approach to identifying and quantifying the factors that have contributed to the shortage such as regulatory barriers, educational preparation, salary and benefit structures, and characteristics of the workplace.

AONE applauds your efforts and those of Mr. Welch to include this needed legislation as an amendment to H.R. 4147 the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007.

Sincerely,

CAROL A. WATSON,
President.

PAMELA A. THOMPSON,
Chief Executive Officer.

NEW JERSEY HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION,
Princeton, NJ, February 4, 2008.

Hon. RUSH HOLT,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HOLT: On behalf of our 119 member hospitals and their systems, I am writing to express our strong support for the Holt/Welch Amendment to H.R. 3147, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007 that would incorporate your bill, H.R. 667, the Nursing School Capacity Act of 2007.

We have all known for too long that we have an ongoing shortage of nurses in this country, and although we have seen a recent increase in nursing candidates, we cannot keep pace with the demands to educate new nurses. One of the major issues is the inability to expand upon our nursing educational programs in this country. Within the past year 125,000 qualified potential nursing students have been placed on waiting lists, and