

globally, and I have been privileged to be a participant in these activities.

Scott has actively served on the board of many organizations that teach and exemplify peace and empowerment, including the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Middle East Witness, Refuser Solidarity Network, Middle East Advisory Committee of the American Friends Service Committee, Isla Vista Youth Project, Thomas Merton Unity (Nonviolence) Center, the Isla Vista People's Life Fund, California Youth Advocate Program, National Youth Advocate Program, and the Interfaith Peace-Builders.

Madam Speaker, true men of peace grace generations and, in my lifetime, I have witnessed Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela. I am proud to commend Scott Kennedy as a true man of peace, and I am proud to call him my friend.

REMARKS IN RECOGNITION OF T.
JACK FOSTER

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, this evening I salute one of the young pioneers of the 12th Congressional District. T. Jack Foster, Jr. in his 80th year, is being honored by the Rotary Club of Foster City on Saturday, September 27, 2008.

In 1960, after a successful career in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he constructed over 1500 single family homes, T. Jack Foster moved to San Mateo County to join his father, T. Jack Senior and brothers, J.R. and Richard, in planning and building a vital, safe and environmentally sound community that would become known as Foster City, California.

Foster City is now a successful bedroom, office and retail community of 30,000 full-time residents and an equal number of employees who commute to the many companies doing business there. A city like no other, it is built around a series of lagoons and canals that not only provide beautiful views, but enhance the city with a vast array of recreational opportunities.

Born July 21, 1928 in Norman, Oklahoma, Jack received a degree in Business Administration from the University of Oklahoma, where he was Editor of the Sooner Yearbook and inducted into Phi Eta Sigma and Beta Gamma Sigma honorary societies. After college, he served two years of active duty in the United States Air Force before launching his real estate career.

Jack and his lovely and vivacious wife, the former Patricia Chesnut, live in San Mateo. They have a daughter, Lee and two sons, T. Jack III and Mark. Their six creative and energetic grandchildren take after talented grandpa, who is an accomplished singer, actor and tap dancer who has entertained thousands by performing in many local theater productions.

Madam Speaker, Jack is a longtime friend and, on occasion, a gentle critic. He cares passionately about San Mateo County, its people, policies and environment. Jack has given back as much as he has received in his long and fruitful life. He has worked tirelessly to advance healthcare opportunities as Presi-

dent of the Comprehensive Health Planning Council of San Mateo County and first Chairman of the Health Network Consortium of San Mateo County. He has also served as Chairman of the San Mateo County Economic Development Association and is a past President of the Peninsula Community Foundation.

Jack and Pat were notably and appropriately honored as 2000 Volunteers of the Year by the Volunteer Center.

Madam Speaker, my district and our San Francisco Bay Area would be a different place without the vision and hard work of the Foster family. It gives me great joy to inform the rest of our nation of the lifetime of service of T. Jack Foster and his exceptional family. I wish him a very happy birthday and hopes for many, many more and bestow my congratulations on him for this latest honor.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE
NATIONAL DAY OF TAIWAN

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. WU. Madam Speaker, I would like to offer my warmest wishes and congratulations to the people of Taiwan in commemoration of the National Day of the Republic of China (Taiwan), which is celebrated every year on October 10.

In March of this year, the people of Taiwan participated in Taiwan's fourth direct and democratic presidential election. The smooth and peaceful transition from one administration to another is a testament to Taiwan's continued dedication to the principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. I commend the people of Taiwan for building a democratic, peaceful, and prosperous island.

For more than 50 years, the United States and Taiwan have fostered a close relationship, which has been of mutual political, economic, cultural, and strategic advantage. In celebration of this year's Double Tenth National Day, it is my hope that the United States, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China can work together to promote enduring peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in the Taiwan Strait.

CONGRESSMAN RAY LAHOOD'S
DEDICATION TO PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a dear friend and colleague, Congressman RAY LAHOOD. RAY has been a faithful servant to the people of the 18th District of Illinois since first being elected in 1994 to the 104th Congress. Before that he was a schoolteacher, a longtime community leader, member of the Illinois General Assembly and Chief of Staff for former U.S. House Minority Leader Robert Michel. Each of these opportunities furthered his dedication to serving the American people and eventually led him to serve as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

RAY and I have worked closely together over the years on a number of issues, but one that has always been near to our hearts because of its importance to the United States, has been our work with the nation of Lebanon, the land of our ancestors. As Members of Congress who are deeply interested in Lebanon, the people of Lebanon, and the ability of Lebanon to rise above the turmoil and conflicts which have overtaken the country, we are able to view the recent election of the new Lebanese President as a strong signal to the world that progress and forward movement continues to be made in the Middle East.

RAY has always had a deep respect for the institution of Congress, a trait which can be attested to by any and all who have served with him over the years. While RAY has left many lasting legacies during his time here in the House of Representatives, for me his friendship will be one I continue to treasure the most as he, his wife Kathy and their family move on to this new chapter in their lives.

Although it seems that we as a Congress can't find ourselves in agreement on many things, one thing that is beyond dispute is that Ray has embodied the ideal of the civil servant who tirelessly has served the interests of the American people.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY OF ALMA VIA

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, among the most vulnerable in our society are those in our elder population.

That is why I have such profound respect and deep gratitude for the good work done by Alma Via of San Francisco. Alma Via is an assisted living and memory care community that services the senior community in the San Francisco Bay Area. They celebrate five excellent years of service this fall, on November 1, 2008.

Alma Via is a member of Elder Care Alliance, a nonprofit faith-based organization committed to serving and enriching the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of older adults. Their sponsors, the Sisters of Mercy, Burlingame, and the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, bring a 130-year tradition of service to their communities and commitment to enhancing the quality of life for elders through creative programs and supportive services.

The Elder Care Alliance is composed of six communities in California and serves 700 elders. Their programs include special services for those with early to late stage dementia and without them, many of these older Americans would possibly not receive treatment. Their loving and professional communities are staffed by 620 dedicated staff members who provide daily care for residents in a manner that respects and celebrates the dignity and inherent worth of each person.

Madam Speaker, I can personally attest to the excellence and compassion of the Sisters of Mercy. Wherever they choose to serve, their mission always moves their community and the world forward. The good work provided by Alma Via and the Elder Care Alliance

is certainly no different. I ask you to join me in commending them for the important and necessary role they play in society by working tirelessly to help an expanding number of adults who desire to remain vital and active in their later years.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 2638, the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act for FY09.

Account: Army, RDT&E, Army Missile Defense Systems Integration (Non-Space).

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Lamar University.

Address of Requesting Entity: 4400 MLK Blvd., P.O. Box 10009, Beaumont, TX 77710.

Description of Request: The Advanced Fuel Cell Research Program (AFC) at Lamar University is currently operating fuel cell test beds on behalf of U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command (USASMDC) that simulates power requirements and characterizes alternative power and storage capabilities for a wide variety of USASMDC systems. Critical need continues to exist for an efficient and clean advanced renewable energy source to meet urgent U.S. Army space and missile defense battlefield requirements. AFC continues to develop, test and validate advanced fuel cell technologies necessary to enable lightweight, power efficient, environmentally clean, and cost-effective renewable energy technology and products for Army space and missile defense systems including: sensors, radars, weapons, and communications. The FY09 request will leverage fuel cell technology achievements funded through previous DoD Appropriations bills by transitioning prototype lightweight fuel cells into Army renewable power products. UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) prototypes integrated with the AFC-developed fuel cells will be flight-tested and demonstrated under field conditions to validate reliable, long duration, and quality power for missile defense situational awareness missions. The AFC's advanced hydride fuel cell will validate the UAV's unique long loitering time and stealth capabilities for critical extended endurance surveillance missions. Amount Received: \$3,000,000. These funds will be used to pay labor costs for 22 full time personnel, lab and test bed equipment and supplies, and facilities improvement.

Account: Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard Bridge Replacement.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association.

Address of Requesting Entity: 2010 Butler Drive, Friendswood, TX 77546.

Description of Request: Galveston Causeway Railroad Bridge Replacement. Today, 21 thousand barges move 29 million tons of cargo worth \$10 billion through the Galveston Bridge each year. In 2001, after a lengthy review process, the bridge was declared a haz-

ard to navigation by the Coast Guard under the Truman Hobbs Act. The current estimated cost of replacement is almost \$68 million. This request is consistent with the intended and authorized purpose of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard, under the Truman Hobbs Act. Amount Received: \$4,000,000. Under the Truman Hobbs Act, the federal government pays 90 percent of replacement cost and the bridge owner, Galveston County pays 10 percent.

VETERANS' BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I submit the following:

S. 3023, as amended, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008, reflects a Compromise Agreement reached by the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs (the Committees) on the following bills reported during the 110th Congress: H.R. 674; H.R. 3681, as amended; H.R. 3889, as amended; H.R. 4255, as amended; H.R. 5664, as amended; H.R. 5892, as amended; H.R. 6221, as amended; H.R. 6225, as amended, and H.R. 6832 (House Bills); S. 1315, as amended; and S. 3023, as amended (Senate Bills).

H.R. 674 passed the House on July 31, 2008; H.R. 3681, as amended, passed the House on May 20, 2008; H.R. 3889, as amended, passed the House on May 20, 2008; H.R. 4255, as amended, passed the House on July 31, 2008; H.R. 5664, as amended, passed the House on May 20, 2008; H.R. 5892, as amended, passed the House on July 30, 2008; H.R. 6221, as amended, passed the House on July 31, 2008; H.R. 6225, as amended, passed the House on July 31, 2008; H.R. 6832 passed the House on September 11, 2008; S. 1315, as amended, passed the Senate on April 24, 2008, and passed the House, as amended, on September 22, 2008; and S. 3023, as amended, passed the Senate on September 16, 2008.

The Committees have prepared the following explanation of S. 3023, as further amended, to reflect a Compromise Agreement between the Committees. Differences between the provisions contained in the Compromise Agreement and the related provisions of the House Bills and the Senate Bills are noted in this document, except for clerical corrections, conforming changes made necessary by the Compromise Agreement, and minor drafting, technical, and clarifying changes.

TITLE I—COMPENSATION AND PENSION MATTERS

REGULATIONS ON CONTENTS OF NOTICE TO BE PROVIDED CLAIMANTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS REGARDING THE SUBSTANTIATION OF CLAIMS

CURRENT LAW

Under current law, the Secretary has general authority to issue regulations.

SENATE BILL

Section 101 of S. 3023, as amended, would amend subsection (a) of section 5103 of title 38, United States Code, to add a new paragraph that would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to promulgate regulations specifying the content of notices required by the Veterans Claims Assistance Act (VCAA). The regulations required by S.

3023 would provide that the notice specify for each type of claim for benefits the general information and evidence required to substantiate the claim. The regulations would specify different content of the notices depending on the type of claim concerned, whether it be an original claim, a claim for reopening, or a claim for increase in benefits. The Senate bill would provide authority for additional or alternative content for notice if appropriate to the particular benefit or services sought under the claim. The regulations would also be required to include in the notice the time period within which such information and evidence must be submitted. The provision would be applicable only to notices which would be sent on or after the date the regulations are effective.

HOUSE BILL

The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

COMPROMISE AGREEMENT

Section 101 of the Compromise Agreement generally follows the Senate language.

The Committees note that the notice required by section 5103 applies to all types of applications for benefits and services. While the Committees recognize that veterans seeking service-connected compensation are most likely to receive VCAA notices, the Compromise Agreement specifically provides that the notice shall provide that the content of notices be appropriate to the type of benefits or services sought. The Committees intend that the Compromise Agreement would require a notice involving a pension claim to have different content than a notice concerning a clothing allowance or a claim for specially adapted housing.

The Committees emphasize that VCAA notices are required only in cases in which additional information or evidence is needed to substantiate the claim. If the information and evidence needed to substantiate the claim is submitted with the application or contained in the claims file, no VCAA notice is required. For example, claims for education, health care, housing, vocational rehabilitation, and burial benefits might contain sufficient information and evidence to substantiate the claim without the necessity of a VCAA notice.

In other respects, the Committees agree that Senate Report 110-148 contains a full explanation of the provision contained in the Compromise Agreement.

JUDICIAL REVIEW OF ADOPTION AND REVISION BY THE SECRETARY OF VET- ERANS AFFAIRS OF THE SCHEDULE OF RATINGS FOR DISABILITIES OF VET- ERANS

CURRENT LAW

Under current law, section 502 of title 38, judicial review of actions involving VA's rating schedule for disabilities is prohibited.

SENATE BILL

Section 102 of S. 3023, as amended, would authorize the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit to review VA actions relating to the adoption or revision of the VA disability rating schedule in the same manner as other comparable actions of the Secretary are reviewed.

HOUSE BILL

The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

COMPROMISE AGREEMENT

Section 102 of the Compromise Agreement follows the Senate language.