

RECOGNIZING MR. GREG PRESTEMON OF ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI, AS NON-PROFIT EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

HON. W. TODD AKIN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. AKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Greg Prestemon, of St. Charles, Missouri, as the 2008 Non-Profit Executive of the Year at the 3rd Annual Honors Program organized by the Saint Charles Business Magazine.

Since Greg's arrival at the Economic Development Center, EDC, in 1993, St. Charles County's population has grown from 232,360 to nearly 350,000 today. In fact, St. Charles County continues to be one of the fastest growing counties in the State of Missouri.

As president and chief executive officer of the Economic Development Center of St. Charles County, Greg has served 15 successful years at the helm of the Economic Development Center, which is also celebrating its 15-year anniversary of their small business incubator facility in St. Peters, Missouri.

Mr. Prestemon's nomination highlights the way that St. Charles County has grown and prospered, particularly through his work at the Economic Development Center and Partners for Progress.

During Greg's tenure, the accomplishments of the Economic Development Center include more than \$100 million of business financing, the creation and retention of nearly 5,300 jobs, more than 150 business graduates and 500 jobs from the EDC incubation program. These accomplishments do not even include the thousands who have attended EDC business training events, and Greg's involvement in countless special projects such as workforce housing, health care and education initiatives and the road tax campaign.

I thank Greg for his service to the community. He is a shining example of the great leadership we have in Missouri and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on his nomination.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, on February 14, 2008, I inadvertently failed to vote on rollcall No. 68. Had I voted I would have voted "aye."

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE FUNDING WARNING RESPONSE ACT

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the Medicare Funding Warning Response Act of 2008 at the request of the

President pursuant to section 803(a) of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 which requires me to do so.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services submitted this proposed legislation to the House of Representatives on February 15, 2008.

The Medicare Modernization Act established a process requiring the President to propose and Congress to consider a legislative response to a Medicare funding warning. A Medicare funding warning is triggered if the Medicare Board of Trustees makes a determination in 2 consecutive years that general revenue Medicare funding is expected to exceed 45 percent of Medicare outlays for the current fiscal year or any of the next 6 fiscal years.

The trustees issued a Medicare funding warning in April 2007. Under the statute, the President is required to submit a legislative proposal to Congress that will lower the ratio to the 45 percent level. The statute further requires the Majority and Minority Leader or their designees to introduce the legislation submitted by the President. Thus today, I am fulfilling my statutory obligation by introducing this legislation.

Let me stress that introducing a bill "by request" should not be interpreted to imply endorsement of the legislation as submitted. As I mentioned, this introduction by me is required, it is not discretionary. Furthermore, let me be clear: While some of the items in the proposal deserve consideration, the proposal includes provisions that I oppose. For example, I have consistently voted against medical malpractice proposals similar to the proposal included in this package.

I have strong reservations about the basic approach of the trigger. The trigger establishes an arbitrary limit on general revenues that does not provide a meaningful measure of Medicare's fiscal health and would take some legitimate options for strengthening Medicare financing off the table. The focus on general revenue spending inherently favors some options over others.

Ironically, this process was included in the Medicare prescription drug legislation enacted by the then-Republican Majority and signed by President Bush—legislation that increased the liabilities of the Medicare program by \$8.5 trillion. In fact, we would not have exceeded the 45 percent threshold but for the prescription drug benefit financed by general revenues.

In sharp contrast, the Democratic Majority in this House is committed to ensuring that the Medicare program continues to function effectively for beneficiaries, providers and taxpayers well into the future. Remember, the House enacted reforms to strengthen Medicare as part of the Children's Health and Medicare Protection (CHAMP) Act of 2007. The CHAMP Act would have extended Medicare solvency by 2 years. The savings from reforming spending on Medicare Advantage plans in the CHAMP Act would have met the requirements of the trigger.

Let me say that it is imperative that we get serious about our long-term fiscal challenges. Analysts of diverse ideological perspectives and nonpartisan officials at the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, and the Government Accountability Office, GAO, have all warned that current fiscal policy is unsustainable over the long term even under the most optimistic pro-

jections. Medicare and Medicaid will grow by nearly five times as a share of the economy by 2050 under current projections if the growth of health care costs does not slow. And these programs will absorb as much of our Nation's economy by the late 2040s as the entire Federal budget does today.

Turning a blind eye to our long-term challenges would not only be irresponsible, it would be dangerous to our Nation's continued success. Those of us who believe that the American people want their government to invest in national security, health care, education, infrastructure, scientific research and other priorities have a critical stake in addressing the budgetary pressures that will be created by the growth of entitlement spending.

Finding a politically viable, equitable and financially sound solution to our fiscal challenges and meeting our responsibility to future generations will require bipartisan discussions in which all options must be on the table. Unfortunately, the Medicare trigger is ill-suited to such a process. Further, I am very skeptical that we can deal with the issue of entitlements in a bipartisan manner in the current environment, especially since the current administration has made it clear that it is not willing to discuss all options.

I believe it is critical that we begin to lay the foundation for bipartisan action on this issue in the next Congress. I am encouraged that efforts to establish a bipartisan task force with a broad mandate to address our fiscal challenges have been initiated. I believe this issue will be one of the most important that the next Congress and the administration must address.

We must have an open, honest debate about the best way to strengthen our entitlement programs that millions of Americans count upon.

RECOGNIZING UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS AEROSPACE ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, sports fans across the country likely know the University of Kansas for its winning tradition in men's basketball and recently for the success of its football team that won the 2008 Orange Bowl. While these are accomplishments Kansans are proud of, I want to draw attention today to the impressive talents and accomplishments in the University's aerospace engineering program.

Earlier this year, at the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics 46th Annual Aerospace Sciences Meeting and Exhibit, two University of Kansas students and one professor were honored for excellence in aircraft design, aeronautics research and instruction.

Nobuya Nishio, an aerospace engineering student, won first place in the international aircraft design competition for designing an eye-catching two-seat airplane with a 300-mile range capable of traveling 143 miles per hour. Nobuya is the eighteenth student from the University of Kansas to place first in this competition since 1968.

Another Kansas student, Roelof Vos received the Abe M. Zarem Award for Aeronautics Research. Roelof's groundbreaking

work on actuators will enhance the ability of airplanes to fly through turbulent air while maintaining smooth flight. In addition to the improvements this will bring to passenger comfort, planes will benefit from the new actuator technology by experiencing less airframe fatigue, which leads to less stressed aircraft, safer flight and ultimately lower cost air travel.

Both of these students were under the instruction and mentorship of Dr. Ron Barrett-Gonzalez, Associate Professor of Aerospace Engineering. Professor Barrett received the Abe M. Zarem Educator Award in recognition of his outstanding instruction. His research focuses on flight control using adaptive aerostructures that have been integrated in high speed, high precision flight control systems and are ideal for countermunitions. Professor Barrett's lab is the only academic facility in the country that specializes in these countermunitions that protect our Armed Forces by intercepting mortars and other weapons.

American economic competitiveness is strengthened as more students study and excel in the academic areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. I join Kansans in congratulating Nobuya, Roelof and Professor Barrett for their outstanding creativity, insight and hard work. Jayhawks not only excel in athletics but fly high in the classroom, as well.

TOM LANTOS PASSES HUMANITY'S TORCH

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, this House lost one of its finest Members with the passing of Tom Lantos. He was a dear friend, who taught me a great deal about human rights and a life dedicated to service, and I will miss him. One of my favorite memories of our service together is the day I was arrested alongside Tom in front of the Sudanese Embassy in Washington, DC, protesting the continuing genocide in Darfur.

I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues an article from the February 22, 2008 edition of the Boston Herald that urges everyone to emulate Tom's legacy of service and devotion to human rights. Written by Anthony Barsamian with the Armenian Assembly of America and Michael Ross, the son of a Holocaust survivor, it expresses what we all feel about Tom's commitment to ending man's inhumanity to man.

[From the Boston Herald, February 22, 2008]

TOM LANTOS PASSES HUMANITY'S TORCH
(By Anthony Barsamian and Michael Ross)

Humanity lost one of its greatest voices this month. No one lived up to the promise of the words "never again" better than Rep. Tom Lantos. As the only Holocaust survivor to have served in Congress, he dedicated his career to working on behalf of others.

Those who survive genocide live with complexities that few can understand—post-traumatic stress, feelings of guilt for having survived, a victim of man's most diabolical incarnation, a witness to history—to name a few. On the one hand, a survivor must rectify his tragic past while on another, he must make sense of a stunted future. With great

strength and determination, survivors and their families move forward and rebuild their lives, for a second time.

To start a life anew is difficult enough. To do so as a U.S. congressman is nothing short of miraculous. Only in America—as Lantos would say.

For Holocaust survivors and their families, Lantos was a source of pride. For those who searched for a voice of justice, in him they found their greatest friend.

Tom Lantos spoke out against genocide in Darfur, at one point being arrested for protesting outside the Sudanese Embassy along with four other Democratic lawmakers, including Bay State Reps. Jim McGovern and John Olver.

One of his final acts was a resolution that would recognize the slaughter of innocent Armenians for what it was—genocide. As chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Lantos refused to be part of a campaign of denial and looked beyond the politics of convenience by passing the resolution.

During a PBS interview last October, Lantos said, "This is one of those events which has to be settled once and for all: 1.5 million utterly innocent Armenian men, women and children were slaughtered. And the Turkish government, until now, has intimidated the Congress of the United States from taking this measure. I think it's important, at a time when genocides are going on in Darfur and elsewhere, not to be an accomplice in sweeping an important genocide under the rug."

The resolution has yet to be acted upon by the entire House—something, no doubt, Lantos, would want.

Lantos understood what it meant to stand up for his fellow man, much in the same way someone helped him when he needed it. An otherwise ordinary bureaucrat, Raoul Wallenberg, chose to become an extraordinary person when, over the course of his diplomatic career, he found a way to save 100,000 Hungarian Jews. Lantos was among them.

As people who have inherited a legacy from our families, we have an obligation to recognize man's inhumanity to man regardless of whether it is convenient to do so. We have an obligation to properly recognize an injustice by its name, regardless of the political discomfort or cost. And, like Lantos, we have an obligation to live by the words "never again" and to remind the world when those ominous words are back in play.

In Tom Lantos' passing we lost the sentinel on humanity's gate. We owe it to those he protected to speak the truth, no matter the cost.

A TRIBUTE TO ROB COGORNO

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, in 1993, I was privileged to be appointed to the Appropriations Committee. I brought to the assignment my ideas and priorities and a determination to use the power of the purse to change lives for the better.

To be effective I needed much more. I needed Rob Cogorno.

Rob joined our staff bringing with him years of experience working on issues that had my strongest interest. It was a blessed partnership from the first day.

Rob came with remarkable qualities. He knew the issues thoroughly. He was tireless. He knew the answer or how to find it.

But to focus only on Rob's mastery of the process would be an injustice. He is effective because he is compassionate and sincere as well as smart.

He cares about people. Low income heating assistance was not just a program, it was thousands of cold seniors. National Cancer Institute funding was not just about scientists and research grants, it was millions of people suffering from diseases that he believed could be helped. The Ryan White AIDS funding legislation was about millions of Americans and about people he knew personally who needed a cure and needed hope.

His commitment earned him the respect of his colleagues and members. He is a warm person. He takes the time to make you laugh, share a piece of gossip, lift your spirits. Over the years he has held important positions working for the Democratic House Leadership and most recently for the Majority Leader.

I am grateful to Rob for his leadership, passion, and partnership over the years. I wish you well. I treasure our friendship.

Buona Fortuna!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, on February 12, 2008, due to obligations in the district, I missed the following recorded votes:

Roll No. 43, on H. Res. 954—Honoring the life of senior Border Patrol agent Luis A. Aguilar, who lost his life in the line of duty near Yuma, Arizona, on January 19, 2008; had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Roll No. 44, on H. Res. 909—Commemorating the courage of the Haitian soldiers that fought for American independence in the "Siege of Savannah," and for Haiti's independence and renunciation of slavery; had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Roll No. 45, on H. Con. Res. 281—Celebrating the birth of Abraham Lincoln and recognizing the prominence the Declaration of Independence played in the development of Abraham Lincoln's beliefs; had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

IN CELEBRATION OF BLACKS WHO HAVE CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Black History Month and to enter into the RECORD an editorial from New York CaribNews for the week ending February 19, 2008, "Blacks Who Helped Change the Course of History and Improved the Quality of People's Lives Everywhere."

This editorial makes mention of many Blacks who have contributed to American history, with deeds that have benefited the lives of all Americans. Some of these pioneers have familiar names—other names are not as familiar, however, their contributions are important all the same. They include: Oscar