

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. THOMAS H. ALLEN**

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 9, 2008*

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, on April 3, 2008, I was unavoidably absent from the House due to a family illness.

If had been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote No. 159, a motion by Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS of Washington to recommit H.R. 4847 to the Committee on Science and Technology with instructions.

I would have also voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 160, final passage of H.R. 4847, a bill to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration.

# CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA TO END ITS CRACK-DOWN IN TIBET

SPEECH OF

**HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 8, 2008*

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, the United States and the People's Republic of China, PRC, are friends and partners in this international community. I truly believe that the governments of both nations endeavor to support the wellbeing of not only their people, but also of those around the world. Like individuals, governments learn from experience, and learn from the experiences of others. And like individuals, perhaps with more frequency and greater impact, governments make errors in judgment. In just our short history, the United States government and its people have made more than our fair share of mistakes. We have endured social strife at home with class and racial warfare, and our Federal, State and local governments have played their ugly part, from voting rights to segregation and violence. And throughout this century, our Nation knew that the world was watching. During World War II, all eyes were on America, waiting for its actions to meet its rhetoric of freedom. It was in this backdrop that our grassroots civil rights movement pushed our society towards our own American ideals. We have learned many lessons from our own history on how to create and maintain a peaceful society, prioritizing the protection and promotion of human rights—there are many lessons to share, and many yet to learn. it

As the Olympic Summer Games near, the spotlight is now on our friend China and on its actions. China has made inroads as a new member of the global community, as their economy becomes increasingly integrated into the world economy. The groundwork for greater freedom is slowly developing, as it makes incremental gains to strengthen the rule of law. There comes a time, however, when greater scrutiny calls for greater action. As friends, I have always believed that constructive criticism should be encouraged. That is why today, I rise in support for H. Res. 1077. Friends do not always agree with each other's actions, but I know that the U.S. and China share some common values and concerns, including the wellbeing of our peoples and stability and peace in our Nations.

The Chinese government is concerned over the instability and ethnic tensions that have erupted after the protests of March 10, 2008. The widespread arrests and detentions of Tibetans and harsh statements by the Chinese government against the Dalai Lama, however, have not helped the situation, but instead have fueled the fires of resentment. Certainly, rioters and those who have perpetrated violent crimes should be tried and punished. Their departure from the doctrine of nonviolence as supported by the Dalai Lama and other great civil rights leaders, such as César Chávez, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, has weakened their voice. To further social stability and sustained harmony, and to decrease resentment and anger among the Tibetan people, I believe that it is of utmost importance to differentiate between those peaceful protestors and those who have turned to violence—violence reported by Chinese and international journalists.

Despite these reports, the government nevertheless removed all international journalists from the Tibetan Autonomous Region. It is difficult to know exactly what had transpired in the Tibetan areas, as well as the current situation in the region, because of this unwarranted expulsion. In the end, there were conflicting reports on the nature of the protests in China and on the numbers of those injured and killed by not only China's security forces, but also by certain Tibetan protestors. It is essential that journalists and international monitors have unfettered access to Tibetan areas to shed light on the situation on the ground.

Finally, to create a harmonious society, all members must feel a part of the process, thereby developing trust and confidence among all parties. When racial tensions have arisen in the United States, the best of us have acknowledged mistakes, embraced them, and worked toward solutions, together. In the same vain, I firmly believe that direct dialogue between the government of the People's Republic of China and His Holiness the Dalai Lama is necessary for any meaningful, short- and long-term solution to this dire situation. Previous rounds of dialogue between the PRC and representatives of the Dalai Lama have resulted in an apparent misunderstanding of the Dalai Lama's concept of Tibetan "autonomy." While there are some proponents for an independent Tibet within the Tibetan community, the Dalai Lama has repeatedly shared his support for an autonomous Tibetan region within the governance of China that ensures basic freedoms for the Tibetan people with protections for their culture, language, and religion. The Chinese government should take advantage of his moderate position and considerable influence on the Tibetan population, and engage in peaceful, direct talks with the Dalai Lama. In fact, China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law has already laid the foundation by guaranteeing the rights of ethnic minorities to administer their internal affairs. This foundation should not be discarded, but built upon with further assurances and implementations of these guarantees.

It is in the spirit of friendship, mutual understanding, and shared lessons that I rise to support H. Res. 1077. We know governments can make mistakes, and we can all work together to restore peace during times of social tension. The award of the Olympic bid to China is a global acknowledgement, a global celebration, of China's membership in the

global community. As the Olympic torch is introduced in San Francisco for its only appearance in the United States, I hope that protestors and bystanders show their respect for the Olympic Summer Games and refrain from violence. As an advocate for human rights and a staunch supporter of our First Amendment rights, I admire the courage and conviction exhibited by peaceful protestors. Finally, I hope that China will use this opportunity of greater scrutiny to speak directly with the Dalai Lama to build the trust and confidence necessary to achieve the harmony it seeks.

## HONORING JOHN EVERETT BIVEN

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 9, 2008*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize John Everett Biven of Liberty, MO. John is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 2418, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

John has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years John has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending John Everett Biven for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

# A PROCLAMATION HONORING COACH MARK OBERHOLTZER FOR COACHING THE NEWARK HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM TO WINNING THE BOYS' DIVISION I STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

**HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 9, 2008*

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Coach Mark Oberholtzer showed hard work and dedication to the sport of basketball; and

Whereas, Mark Oberholtzer was a leader and mentor for the Newark High School Boys' Basketball Team; and

Whereas, Coach Oberholtzer has been a role model for sportsmanship on and off of the court; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that along with his friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I congratulate Coach Mark Oberholtzer for leading the Newark High School Boys' Basketball Team to winning the Boys' Division I State Basketball Championship. We recognize the tremendous hard work and leadership he has demonstrated during the 2007–2008 Basketball season.