

Veeseer not only shared his gift for teaching with the students of North Central Area Schools, he also shared his gift of coaching with hundreds of NCA students throughout the years. For 28 years he coached the Jets in many capacities. The lessons he taught his players on and off the field will live on forever. Coach Veeseer led the following teams: 19 years with Varsity Football, 7 years with Junior Varsity Football, 4 years with Girls Track, 3 years with Junior High & Freshman Boys Basketball, 3 years as a referee and one year each with Junior High Girls Basketball and Varsity Boys Track.

Madam Speaker, the dedicated men and women who devote their careers to educating the next generation seldom receive the praise they deserve. I ask that you and my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives join me in thanking these four outstanding individuals for their service and in wishing them well in their retirement.

REMEMBERING VIRGINIA TECH
AND COLUMBINE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, Wednesday, April 16, 2008, was the anniversary of the tragic events on the campus of Virginia Tech that took the lives of 32 people and wounded many more. Sunday, April 20, 2008 marked the 9th anniversary of the Columbine High School massacre. These events rank second and third among the deadliest school shootings in the history of the United States. At the same time, from the wreckage has emerged a strong desire to prevent violence of this magnitude in the future.

I am proud to be the sponsor of H.R. 808, to establish a Department of Peace and Non-violence, because this bill seeks to make non-violence an organizing principle in our society. This cabinet-level department would address the myriad forms of violence that affect our Nation and the global community. As the disasters at Columbine and Virginia Tech have shown, violence has deep and lasting consequences that must be addressed by looking at root causes and endeavoring to find preventative solutions that are both dynamic and comprehensive. The Department of Peace and Nonviolence would provide a systematic tool to accomplish this admirable goal.

We can all agree that violence in our schools, among youth and adults alike, is an ongoing problem that must be addressed. H.R. 808 is a way to address not only violence in our schools but the violence that exists in our homes, workplaces and institutions throughout our communities both nationally and internationally.

COMMEMORATING THE 93RD ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN
GENOCIDE

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, today, April 24th, marks the 93rd anniversary of the begin-

ning of the Armenian genocide. I rise today to commemorate this terrible chapter in human history, and to help ensure that it will never be forgotten.

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government began to arrest Armenian community and political leaders. Many were executed without ever being charged with crimes. Then the government deported most Armenians from Turkish Armenia, ordering that they resettle in Ottoman Syria. Many deportees never reached that destination.

From 1915 to 1918, more than a million Armenians died of starvation or disease on long marches, or were massacred outright by Turkish forces. From 1918 to 1923, Armenians continued to suffer at the hands of the Turkish military, which eventually removed all remaining Armenians from Turkey.

We mark this anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide because this tragedy for the Armenian people was a tragedy for all humanity. It is our duty to remember, to speak out and to teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and the oppression and terrible suffering endured by the Armenian people.

We hope the day will soon come when it is not just the survivors who honor the dead but also when those whose ancestors perpetrated the horrors acknowledge their terrible responsibility and commemorate as well the memory of genocide's victims.

Sadly, we cannot say humanity has progressed to the point where genocide has become unthinkable. We have only to recall the "killing fields" of Cambodia, mass killings in Rwanda, "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Kosovo, and massacres and wholesale destruction of villages in Darfur to see that the threat of genocide persists. We must renew our commitment never to remain indifferent in the face of such assaults on innocent human beings.

We also remember this day because it is a time for us to celebrate the contribution of the Armenian community in America—including hundreds of thousands in California—to the richness of our character and culture. The strength they have displayed in overcoming tragedy to flourish in this country is an example for all of us. Their success is moving testimony to the truth that tyranny and evil cannot extinguish the vitality of the human spirit.

The United States has an ongoing opportunity to contribute to a true memorial to the past by strengthening Armenia's emerging democracy. We must do all we can through aid and trade to support Armenia's efforts to construct an open political and economic system.

With the arrogance of absolute impunity, Adolf Hitler famously urged his commanders to attack Poland with no fear of history's judgment because, as he put it, "Who remembers the Armenians?" The answer is, we do. And we will continue to remember the victims of the 1915–23 genocide because, in the words of the philosopher George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 2830, COAST GUARD AU-
THORIZATION ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1126, the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2830, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007. I also strongly support the underlying legislation, which will provide our Nation's Coast Guard with the resources it needs in order to successfully execute all of its missions.

I would like to thank my colleagues, Congressmen OBERSTAR and CUMMINGS, for introducing this bill, as well as the Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, Congressman THOMPSON, for his leadership on this important issue. Madam Speaker, I was pleased to work with Chairman THOMPSON and offer an amendment during our Homeland Security Committee markup to this important legislation, which I felt improved the bill. My amendment mandated the creation of a strategic plan to utilize assistance programs to assist ports and facilities that are found by the Secretary not to maintain effective anti-terrorism measures. I am also offering an amendment on the House floor today calling on the Secretary of Homeland Security to examine the challenges and delays faced by transportation workers seeking to obtain TWIC cards at enrollment sites and mandates the development of timelines and benchmarks for implementing the findings of this assessment.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I believe protecting our Nation by air, land, and sea to be critical to our national security interests. This bill, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007, sets forth various provisions that will be beneficial to our maritime interests, and consequently to our national security. Included in the provisions are the establishments of grants for international maritime organizations, the establishment of the Merchant Mariner Medical Advisory Committee, and codified various provisions relating to Coast Guard personnel matters.

For some years now, I have been concerned about the diversion of Coast Guard resources from their historic missions of search and rescue and marine safety, to homeland security missions. Since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, and the Coast Guard's inclusion in the Department, one of the greatest challenges has been ensuring that the funds that the Coast Guard have traditionally received in order to perform their duties remain intact so that they can fulfill the responsibilities that American citizens rely on them to perform, namely ensuring the safety of our nations seas, lakes, rivers, and ports.

We have to ensure that the Coast Guard will get their full funding needed to carry out their responsibilities, and that is precisely what this legislation does. This act authorizes appropriations for FY2008 for the Coast Guard. Furthermore, this act also authorizes the FY2008 levels of Coast Guard active duty military personnel and average military training student loans, allowing for sufficient human resources for the Coast Guard to achieve its

designated goals. This bill explicitly authorizes end-strength by 1,500 members to 47,000 and increasing Coast Guard funding to \$8.4 billion which has not been done since the 1970's.

The act also includes provisions regarding shipping and navigation, vessel size limits, maritime drug law enforcement, fishing vessel safety, liability limits for natural gas deepwater ports, claims against the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, dry bulk cargo residue, merchant mariner matter, and security.

Mr. Speaker, every year, 95 percent of the goods coming into the United States arrive at our nation's seaports. These goods are shipped from ports around the world, some from developed countries and others from developing countries. I am particularly concerned about ports in developing countries. Developing countries have limited resources which means their ability to maintain effective anti-terrorism measures is limited.

We can not allow terrorists to exploit this limitation. Rather, we should work with developing countries and others to build up their anti-terrorism measures. This assistance will benefit all of us. The developing countries will gain the support they need, and we will close a potential gap in our own supply chain. Every gap we close is one less gap that can be exploited by terrorists. I am pleased that this bill requires the Department of Homeland Security to develop a strategic plan to utilize existing assistance programs to assist foreign ports and facilities that are found by the Secretary not to maintain effective anti-terrorism measures. This bill furthermore authorizes the Coast Guard to lend, lease, and donate equipment and provide technical training to non-compliant foreign ports or facilities. The multiple layers of security enhancement authorized in this legislation will minimize the ability of terrorists to target to maritime commerce and negatively impact the global supply chain.

I am pleased that the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 includes specific provisions relating to Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). Within this legislation, MSIs are defined as a historically Black college or university, a Hispanic serving institution, a Tribal College or University, a Predominantly Black institution, or a Native American-serving institution. Section 901 of this important legislation states that the Commandant shall establish a management internship program for students at MSIs, enabling them to intern at Coast Guard headquarters or Coast Guard regional offices in an effort to support the development of civilian, career-midlevel, and senior managers for the service. This legislation furthermore instructs the Coast Guard to work with the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium to create this internship program and authorizes \$2 million to be appropriated to this program.

Mr. Speaker, I have long stressed the importance of including this nation's MSIs in the effort to secure our nation. Section 903 of this legislation states that the Commandant shall establish a Coast Guard Laboratory of Excellence-MSI Cooperative Technology Program at three minority serving institutions to focus on priority security areas for the Coast Guard, such as global maritime surveillance, resilience, and recovery. It also calls on the Commandant to encourage collaboration among the minority serving institutions selected to

participate in the cooperative technology program and institutions of higher education with institutional research and academic program resources and experience. These and other measures included within this bill are absolutely imperative as the Office of Workforce Planning has recently revealed that only 5 percent of the officer corps is African American and only 12 percent of the officer corps is comprised of ethnic minorities, while in the last 3 years the numbers of minority ascensions have actually decreased.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 also increases oversight and efficiency of the TWIC program, which was originally mandated six years ago, yet continues to flounder. To date only 230,000 out of an estimated 845,000 applicants have enrolled in the TWIC program, while the deadline for enrollment is September 25, 2008. While this provision of the Coast Guard Authorization is both timely and important, there is still more which must be done in order to ensure that the program is both effective and efficient, which is why I have offered an amendment.

I would like to reiterate only few of the obstacles that workers have faced in my state of Texas as well in my district of Houston. For example, a marine worker enrolled at the Houston Port enrolled on December 13, 2007. To this date, he still does not yet have a TWIC card. He remained on hold for 4 hours and 10 minutes and was finally told by the operator that he would have to return to Houston to be fingerprinted again after APR. Incidentally, a representative of Higman Marine Services, Inc., asked the same question about their employee, and she was told that he should not return until June. This blatant inconsistency in service and information is simply unacceptable. Furthermore, another transportation worker went to the Beaumont center about 3 weeks ago to pick up his TWIC after being notified it was ready. He traveled from Hemphill, TX (117 miles), and was told that the card was accidentally shipped to Houston and he could drive there (85 miles) to pick it up. He presently does not have his card. The list of incidences in which workers have to continually overcome structural impediments is too long for me to name. It is from my concern for these workers that I have introduced my amendment.

My amendment calls for the Secretary of Homeland Security to compile an assessment of the enrollment sites for transportation security cards issued under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code within 30 days of enactment. The assessment should, at minimum, examine: The feasibility of keeping those enrollment sites open 24 hours per day, and 7 days per week, in order to better handle the large number of applicants for such cards; the feasibility of keeping those enrollment sites open after September 25, 2008; and the quality of customer service, including the periods of time individuals are kept on hold on the telephone, whether appointments are kept, and processing times for applications.

My amendment furthermore calls on the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop timelines and benchmarks for implementing the findings of the assessment as the Secretary deems necessary. By identifying the areas in which enrollment sites for homeland security cards are ineffective and inefficient and creating a timeline through which to implement necessary changes and benchmarks

to ensure their progress and accountability, we will make this Nation a safer place accessible to labor and operations alike.

Long before the horrific events of September 11, 2001, citizens of America relied upon the Coast Guard to ensure the safety of our waterways, and we depend on them still. Therefore, I urge my fellow members of Congress to also support the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 and ensure this rich and necessary tradition remains a thriving and useful part of not only our national defense strategy but also to protect us and the environment from those threats by sea.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this rule and the underlying legislation.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th anniversary of the Nation of Israel.

I join a bipartisan group of my colleagues in support for H. Con. Res. 322—a measure recognizing the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel and reaffirming the bonds of close friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel. This measure passed the House of Representatives earlier this week by a vote of 417 to 0.

As a member of the Democratic Israel Working Group, I am proud to commend Israel and her people on the occasion of this significant milestone.

We and the international community are grateful to Israel for her contributions in the fields of agriculture, technology, and medicine to name a few. Furthermore, Israel is a true democracy in an unstable region of the world, and the nation has long been an ally of the U.S.

Again, I join my colleagues in commending Israel and in looking forward to a future of continued friendship.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial. It is April 24, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun sets today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That's just today, Madam Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,876 days since the tragedy called *Roe v. Wade* was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood