

what has been going on on Wall Street with people walking away with tens of millions of dollars in fees, and the American people's equity just being washed down the drain.

I recommend to the President that he go beyond appointing a person of high repute to the office of Secretary of HUD and have a strike team in the White House that can deal with every region of this country being so hard hit in this mortgage crisis.

Madam Speaker, I will include the articles for the RECORD.

[From the USA Today, Apr. 1, 2008]

HUD CHIEF DEPARTURE A BLOW TO PRESIDENT
(By David Jackson)

WASHINGTON.—For the first time in President Bush's tenure, one of his Cabinet members is stepping down amid a criminal investigation.

Housing Secretary Alphonso Jackson, a longtime Bush ally from Texas, said Monday he'll leave his post on April 18. He announced his departure on the fourth anniversary of his Senate confirmation.

The FBI has been investigating the ties between Jackson and a friend who was paid \$392,000 by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department as a construction manager in New Orleans, according to the Associated Press. Jackson's friend got the job after Jackson allegedly asked a HUD staffer to pass along his name to the Housing Authority of New Orleans.

Other Bush Cabinet members, such as former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, have left office under political clouds. But Jackson, 62, is the highest ranking Bush official to depart in this manner. Last June, former deputy Interior secretary Steven Griles was convicted and sent to prison for lying to a congressional panel about the access and favors he gave to lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

James Thurber, who directs the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University, said Jackson's resignation is not good news for Bush as he seeks political leverage with Congress and tries to stay relevant during an intense presidential campaign to succeed him.

"This is the last thing that he needs," Thurber said.

Separately, Jackson and HUD still face a federal lawsuit by the Philadelphia Housing Authority, accusing Jackson of retaliating against that agency because it refused to turn over land to one of his developer friends.

Carl Greene, executive director of the Philadelphia agency, told USA TODAY that Jackson "orchestrated a series of procedural and enforcement actions" designed to deprive his agency of federal funds.

Greene said his lawyers still may want to question Jackson, but his main goal is to get the department "to allow us to continue carrying out our mission."

HUD official Mark Studdert said in a March 19 letter the federal government was not retaliating against the Philadelphia agency, but was citing it for not being in compliance with federal law on tenants with physical disabilities.

Jackson did not mention the federal investigation or the lawsuit during his brief announcement. "There comes a time when one must attend diligently to personal and family matters," said Jackson, without taking questions from reporters.

The resignation came 10 days after Democratic Sens. Patty Murray of Washington and Chris Dodd of Connecticut urged Bush to remove Jackson, citing "the clouds of justice

Department investigations and reports of an empaneled grand jury" at a time of nationwide mortgage failures.

Bush, who flew early Monday to Kiev, Ukraine, issued a statement saying he accepted Jackson's resignation with regret. A friend of Jackson since they both lived in Dallas in the early 1990s, Bush said, "I have known him to be a strong leader and a good man."

In 2006, the Dallas Business Journal reported Jackson said that he rejected a contract with one man who told him he did not like Bush. That led to a report by the HUD inspector general that Jackson told employees to consider political affiliation when deciding contracts. The inspector general said there was no evidence that contracts were actually awarded on such a basis.

Jackson told the inspector general that the report of his comments in Dallas was not true.

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 1, 2008]

JACKSON RESIGNS AS HUD SECRETARY

(By Dan Eggen and Carol D. Leonnig)

Embattled Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson announced his resignation yesterday, leaving the Bush administration without a top housing official in the midst of a vast mortgage crisis that has shaken the global economy.

Jackson, a longtime friend and former neighbor of President Bush, departed after the White House concluded he had too many controversies swirling around him to be an effective Cabinet member, several HUD officials said privately.

Jackson has been accused of favoritism involving HUD contractors for two years, and the FBI and the Justice Department are investigating whether he steered business to friends.

Several Democratic lawmakers demanded Jackson's resignation last month after he refused to answer questions about the accusations including a lawsuit filed by the Philadelphia Housing Authority against HUD that alleged Jackson and his aides used the department to punish the authority for refusing to transfer valuable property to one of Jackson's friends.

[From the New York Times, Apr. 1, 2008]

PUT THE HOUSING BACK IN HUD

As relieved as we were to see Alphonso Jackson resign on Monday as the secretary of housing and urban development, it was a sad comment on the Bush administration's low regard for HUD's mission that Mr. Jackson was permitted to remain in office so long.

Mr. Jackson offered the usual excuse for resigning; his family, apparently, needs to see more of him. It's evident, though that his resignation has something to do with the ongoing investigation of Mr. Jackson for allegedly using his position for partisan politics and to reward friends. Even this administration, with its high tolerance for that sort of behavior, no doubt considered it untenable—finally—to have such a dubious housing chief when home mortgages are in crisis.

Mr. Jackson made little impression in either housing or urban development. He did make headlines in April 2006, however, when he boasted that he had taken a contract away because the contractor had been critical of President Bush. "Why should I reward someone who doesn't like the president, so they can use funds to try to campaign against the president?" The Dallas Business Journal quoted him as saying in a speech.

Mr. Jackson later said that he was lying when he talked about awarding contracts for political reasons, but an inspector general's

report later that year found that Mr. Jackson had urged his staff members to favor Mr. Bush's supporters when it awarded contracts.

More recently, the Philadelphia Housing Authority sued Mr. Jackson, charging that he had threatened to take away \$50 million because its president would not turn over valuable property to a developer with ties to Mr. Jackson. He has refused to answer the Senate's questions about the matter.

Federal authorities are also reportedly investigating whether he steered housing contracts in New Orleans and the Virgin Islands to friends.

HUD has a long history of mismanagement and corruption, which has been particularly pronounced in Republican administrations. That is most likely because with rare exceptions, like former HUD Secretary Jack Kemp, Republicans do not seem to believe in the agency's mission. Samuel Pierce, the HUD secretary for all eight years of Ronald Reagan's presidency, defended Mr. Reagan's sharp cuts in subsidized housing. He presided over a department mired in scandals, including ones that led to criminal convictions of several of his aides.

President Bush consistently backed Mr. Jackson, as recently as last month after Senators Patty Murray, Democrat of Washington, and Christopher Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, called for his dismissal. But questions kept mounting about Mr. Jackson's integrity at a time when his department's Federal Housing Administration has an important role to play in trying to stave off foreclosures.

Mr. Jackson's resignation clears the way for Mr. Bush to name a top-caliber successor, given the seriousness of the mortgage crisis. It should also be an occasion to reflect on the cost of appointing HUD secretaries whose priorities are politics and patronage rather than housing and urban development.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this body with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is April 1, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand—just today. That is more than the number of innocent American lives that were lost on September 11th, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,853 days since the travesty called Roe v. Wade was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of our own children.

Some of them, Madam Speaker, cried and screamed as they died, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over their vocal cords instead of air, we couldn't hear them.

All of them had at least four things in common.

They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. Each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our

own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says: "No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is that clarion Declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are.

And yet Madam Speaker, another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection that we should have given them.

Madam Speaker, let me conclude, in the hope that perhaps someone new who heard this sunset memorial tonight will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies, that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express, and that 12,853 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that the America that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust, is still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their babies than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Madam Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of the innocent unborn. May that be the day we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect the least of these, our tiny American brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is April 1, 2008—12,853 days since *Roe v. Wade* first stained the foundation of this nation with the blood of its own children—this, in the land of free and the home of the brave.

THANK YOU, PAT SALBERG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bid a fond farewell to a long-time member of my district staff, Pat Salberg. Pat recently retired after

23 years of dedicated service to the people of Illinois' 13th Congressional District.

Having served as a caseworker on the staff of my predecessor, Representative Harris Fawell, Pat was kind enough to agree to stay with my office—only temporarily, she said—to aid the transition. That was 10 years ago.

It seems her retirement plans just kept getting pushed back by an untiring love of helping others. From seniors with Social Security questions to a homeless mom looking for shelter for her child, Pat never hesitated to go above and beyond to find a solution for those in need.

Were you to ask her colleagues about it, they would tell you that her love for others is rivaled only by her love of animals, both cuddly and otherwise. In fact, members of my staff in the district are to this day forbidden from stepping on spiders or other insects that might be roaming around the office. Pat insisted that they be scooped up to safety and set free outside.

One time she even tried to save a live lobster that someone had unwittingly given her as a gift. Pat didn't rest until it had been set free in a co-worker's pond.

Needless to say, it is little surprise to any of us who know Pat that Pat plans to spend some of her newly acquired free time volunteering at the Brookfield Zoo. I expect she will also spend more time gardening and playing bridge with friends.

Madam Speaker, Pat is a wonderful colleague and will always remain a part of our team in the 13th Congressional District. As she turns to new, more leisurely pursuits in life, I would like to wish her good health and great happiness. I know her two daughters, Wendy and Debbie, as well as her grandchildren, Megan, Scott, and Collin, will be glad to have Pat around even more. And I thank them for letting us borrow her for as long as they did.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Pat Salberg for all she has done for the community and for me. We will miss her dearly.

HONORING CHARLIE ARA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, this afternoon I rise to recognize Mr. Charlie Ara, the recipient of the First Annual Cesar Chavez Humanitarian Award for the 56th Assembly District of California, for over 50 years of community service and activism in the field of human and civil rights.

Mr. Ara was ordained a Roman Catholic priest by Cardinal James Francis McIntyre on April 25, 1956, at St. Vibiana's Cathedral in Los Angeles, California.

From 1956 to 1970, he served as associate pastor in five large parishes in

the Archdiocese of Los Angeles: St. Lawrence Martyr in the South Bay area; St. Finbar's in the Burbank-Glen Dale area; Visitation in West Los Angeles; All Saints in El Sereno; and St. Cecilia's in the Tustin-Santa Ana area of Orange County.

On August 28, 1963, Mr. Ara participated in the March on Washington, along with over 250,000 people, and experienced Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Mr. Ara has carried Mr. KING's message of equality throughout his career.

Mr. Ara became a strong advocate for social justice, including support for farm workers, anti-Vietnam War activists, and fair housing legislation for Mexican-American families living in public housing projects in East Los Angeles.

In 1970, Mr. Ara married. He and his wife, Shirley, were blessed with five wonderful children: Martin John, Jose Anthony, Rana Annette, Dawna Gibrana, and Matthew Charles.

Mr. Ara became the chief executive and administrator of anti-poverty programs funded by the California Community Services Administration, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the City of Long Beach Department of Rehabilitation.

Through these programs, Mr. Ara assisted Latinos and other ethnic minorities by directing men and women to job training programs. Mr. Ara also established English classes for the Spanish-speaking community, served as a liaison with the welfare department, and sought assistance for the elderly.

Mr. Ara also wrote and obtained the first mental health government grant for the Asian American community in Long Beach serving widows of fallen military servicemembers.

In addition to his advocacy work, Mr. Ara holds a doctoral degree in psychology and has been a marriage and family counselor for 36 years. He has written a best-selling marital success guide titled, "The Grass is Greener Where It is Watered."

Mr. Ara has prepared many thousands of couples for marriage, and has made numerous appearances on national television and radio programs to discuss his work.

Most recently, Mr. Ara led an effort with the Hubert Humphrey Democratic Club of Cerritos and the African-American community to observe the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday in the city of Cerritos.

Madam Speaker and distinguished colleagues, please join me in recognizing Charlie Ara for his many years of service to the community, and for his many years of social justice advocacy. He is a great man who does great work in our community. We respect him tremendously, and he deserves this honor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.