

crisp air of life, being born in the land of the free.

Payton Poe Alexander showed up tipping the scales at 9 pounds-1 ounce and a height of 22 inches. Not bad for his first day on earth. His mother, Kara, my daughter, and his father Shane, are right-thinking, God-fearing people. Payton's little 2-year-old sister Elizabeth, shall we say, is inquisitive.

Mr. Speaker, we all get excited when kids are born, because we see in those innocent eyes the hope of the world, the chance that this new child might make a difference for the rest of us.

My hope for my new grandson is that he grows up embodying the spirit of truth, justice and the American way, and that he plays football for the University of Texas and not Texas A&M.

And that's just the way it is.

OPPOSE THE BUSH COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the Bush Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Like many here, I would like to see our relationship with Colombia strengthened, but the NAFTA-style Colombia FTA would actually do more harm than good.

The Bush administration refuses to change its stubborn ways. By deciding to force the trade agreement through Congress without seeking support or input from the House leadership, the administration continues to demonstrate its lack of judgment and sensibility.

Despite many serious concerns about the Colombia Free Trade Agreement, this administration continues to believe that it can unilaterally demand and approve legislation as it pleases, when it pleases. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way.

Until the Bush administration understands that it must make fundamental changes in its approach to trade, this House will oppose its one-sided trade deals. We need trade deals that work for American working families. The Bush Colombia FTA is not it.

MR. CARTER—DON'T MEET WITH HAMAS

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, The Washington Post reports that President Carter will visit Syria next week to meet with a Hamas assassin, Khaled Meshal. The State Department lists Hamas as a foreign terrorist organization, and it is responsible for the murder of at least 26 American citizens: David and Nava Applebaum of Ohio, killed just before Nava's wedding; Alan Beer of Ohio; Marla Bennet of Cali-

fornia; Benjamin Blustein of Pennsylvania; David Boim of New York; Yael Botwin of California; Dina Carter of North Carolina; Janis Ruth Coulter of Massachusetts; Sara Duker of New Jersey; Matthew Eisenfeld of Connecticut; Tzvi Goldstein of New York; Judith Greenbaum of New Jersey; David Gritz of Massachusetts; Dina Horowitz of Florida; Rabbi Eli Horowitz of Illinois; Tehilla Nathanson of New York, age 3; Malka Roth of New York; Mordechai Reinitz of New York; Yitzhak Reinitz of New York; Leah Stern of New Jersey; Goldie Taubenfeld of New York; Shmuel Taubenfeld, 3 months old, of New York; Nachshon Wachsmann of New York; Ira Weinstein of New York; and Yitzhak Weinstock of California.

President Carter, the voices from the grave beseech you, do not meet with the man that ordered the murder of these American citizens.

I urge Members to sign our letter asking former President Carter not to meet with the killer of American citizens.

SUPPORT THE STOP OUTSOURCING SECURITY ACT

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, the State Department decided to renew Blackwater's \$1.2 billion contract for another year. It has been over 6 months since Blackwater contractors killed 17 innocent Iraqi civilians, 16 months since the Christmas Eve murder in the Green Zone, and 35 months since a Blackwater helicopter dropped CS gas on a traffic jam in Baghdad. Yet there have been no arrests, no charges, no trials, no convictions. Nothing.

The Department of Justice, the FBI and State Department have remained completely silent about these investigations. Meanwhile, those contractors are still working side-by-side with our troops in Iraq.

But what is even more appalling is that our government has ignored those abuses and renewed Blackwater's contract. If you owned a company, would you rehire someone who has killed dozens of innocent people? The State Department's decision not only puts the lives of innocent Iraqi civilians at risk, but it threatens the safety of our troops and jeopardizes our mission in Iraq.

I urge my colleagues to sign on to my bill, H.R. 4102, the SOS, or Stop Outsourcing Security Act, and phase out the use of military security contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan.

WINNING IN IRAQ

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker up-

dated members of the House Armed Services Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee regarding the conditions on the ground in Iraq. Noting successes on the military and political fronts, both indicated reasons to be optimistic about the progress being made.

Having recently visited Iraq, I am not surprised to hear about these successes. Violence is down and reconciliation is happening. But the progress is fragile, a sentiment echoed by both Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus.

During the hearing, many of my Democrat colleagues asked about the cost of the war. Is it expensive? Yes, the cost is expensive. My question to them is, what will be the cost of defeat, and are you willing to pay for it?

HONORING ABBY LEVINE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. KLEIN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable and outstanding member of our community, Mr. Abby Levine. Abby and his wife Mildred have devoted their lives to addressing critical social, political and humanitarian issues.

Abby is celebrating an important milestone this week, the occasion of his 90th birthday. At nine decades young, Abby, in addition to his other commitments, is working to build a vibrant Jewish community among young people in South Florida.

Abby and Mildred helped establish the Levine-Weinberger Jewish Life Center at Florida Atlantic University, which has become the nerve center of Jewish life on campus. Abby and Mildred are also generous supporters of a number of other causes, including the Boca Raton Community Hospital, and their dedication to improving our community is deeply valued.

Madam Speaker, I join countless friends, family members and loved ones in South Florida in wishing Abby a wonderful birthday, and many more years of good health and happiness.

□ 1015

NEW EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION SYSTEM

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on November 1, the Nation's employment verification system, E-Verify, is going to expire.

E-Verify is a broken employment verification system that has helped grow the number of illegal immigrants in America to over 12 million. We have got to find new solutions.

Our bill, H.R. 5515, the New Employment Verification Act or NEVA, would

replace the current paper-based and error-prone I-9 process upon which E-Verify is based with an electronic verification system. H.R. 5515 would use the existing new hire registry reporting process already used by over 90 percent of U.S. employers. This bill will create a national employment verification system for new hires that's reliable and efficient.

With E-Verify scheduled to expire this year, now is the time for the Congress to create a new way to move forward that prevents unauthorized employment. I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor H.R. 5515.

HONORING THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, as an alumnus of the University of Memphis Law School and the congressman from the University of Memphis district, I still grieve over the outcome of the game Monday night, but I want to congratulate the University of Kansas for winning the national basketball championship and thank the city of San Antonio for being such a wonderful host.

On behalf of the citizens of Memphis, I want the country to know we love our team. They brought our city together, which needed a unifying force. We are proud that our coach who made that team what it was has been named the National Coach of the Year by the Naismith Society.

Our players played valiantly. We came very, very close to a national championship. We won more games than any team in NCAA history. We will look back upon this year with fondness and appreciation and we will, like General MacArthur, return.

THE HUGO CHAVEZ RULE

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, it pains me greatly to stand here in the well and report to our colleagues that the Rules Committee late yesterday afternoon reported out what can only be described as the Hugo Chavez rule.

For the first time in the 34-year history of trade promotion authority, we have now decided that we are going to take the action of turning our backs on an agreement that we have made with our closest, most important and strongest ally on the continent of South America.

The Vice President of Colombia has described this action as a slap in the face. Hugo Chavez and the narcoterrorists in Colombia are celebrating this action. It is an absolute outrage that we would do this.

I have to say that this administration 4 years ago embarked on these ne-

gotiations, 2 years ago completed the negotiations, a year and a half ago signed the negotiations. Since August of last year, 265 meetings have been held with Democratic Members by members of the administration, cabinet officials and all, and 27 meetings have been held with the Democratic leadership.

It is time for us to complete this work. It's time for us to strengthen this very important alliance.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote "no" on the Hugo Chavez rule.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2537, BEACH PROTECTION ACT OF 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1083 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1083

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2537) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act relating to beach monitoring, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII before the beginning of consideration of the bill and except pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate. Each amendment so printed may be offered only by the Member who caused it to be printed or his designee and shall be considered as read. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration in the House of H.R. 2537 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART).

All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1083 provides an open rule with a preprinting requirement for consideration of H.R. 2537, the Beach Protection Act of 2007.

The resolution provides 1 hour of general debate, controlled by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Some of our Nation's greatest treasures are the beautiful beaches that surround our country. So many of us have spent time with our families and friends enjoying our country's picturesque coastlines. Our beaches not only provide a place for relaxation and recreation, they are also a vital economic engine that draws tourists from all over the globe.

As a mother and a grandmother, I want to ensure that our Nation's children are swimming and enjoying our beaches that are safe and free of any harmful contamination. Unfortunately, a recent EPA report found that human health studies over the last 50 years have linked swimming and polluted water with significant adverse health effects. Swimming-related diseases can range from minor gastrointestinal diseases to more serious illnesses such as meningitis or hepatitis.

This is extremely troubling and is a great concern to all of us. According to the National List of Beaches, only 57 percent of the Nation's coastal recreation areas are being monitored.

In my home State of California, 114 of our 356 beaches are not monitored, leaving a huge amount of people at risk. That is why I would like to thank Representative PALLONE for his work on such an important piece of legislation, legislation that builds on the ambitious vision that the 1972 Clean Water Act set forth.

As an original author of the 2000 bill, my friend from New Jersey has long been recognized for his efforts to clean up our Nation's beaches.

I would also like to thank Representative TIM BISHOP for his leadership and work on this issue.