

ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND
HERSELF FROM ATTACK

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, as a Member of Congress it is a high honor to cast my vote in the people's House. In my career, I have exercised that privilege over 4,200 times. While my record is not perfect, I am proud that last year I participated in 99 percent of all votes.

That is all the more reason why I am filled with regret that I unintentionally missed my opportunity to cast a vote last Friday on Rollcall No. 10, the resolution recognizing Israel's right to defend herself against attacks from Gaza. As a longtime supporter of Israel and her right to exist, I want to inform the House that were I present for the vote, I would have voted in favor of this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, I offer my strong support of Israel and H. Res. 34. Since the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza in 2005, Hamas has continually launched thousands of rockets into southern Israel, killing innocent civilians, destroying vital infrastructure and private property, and holding hostage virtually all southern Israel's residents.

Though the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire of June 2008 reduced the number of rocket attacks from Gaza, the attacks never fully ended. Instead, Hamas and its foreign allies used this opportunity to smuggle more weapons into the region. Once the ceasefire expired on December 19, 2008, Hamas resumed its daily attacks on Israel with increased ferocity using its new and improved longer range Iranian-made rockets smuggled in during the ceasefire. Israel was left with little choice but to retaliate against these attacks by targeting Hamas' military forces and weapons stockpiles.

While any loss of life is deplorable, the fact remains that it was Hamas who forced Israel to resort to a military solution. Thus, I offer Israel my full support in the efforts to protect her citizens. If America fell under the same daily barrage of rocket attacks, we would not hesitate to strike back with military force, nor would we seek permission to take the necessary steps to protect our citizens.

Madam Speaker, Israel has a legal, moral, and historical right to exist in peace with secure and defensible borders. While it is my earnest prayer that this current conflict may be resolved shortly through a durable and sustainable ceasefire, Israel cannot put at risk the security of her people by allowing Hamas to continue to export violence from Gaza.

The loss of innocent civilian life is tragic and it is deplorable that Hamas complicates Israel's attempts to avoid civilian casualties by stockpiling weapons in homes and in mosques and using public places like schools to launch their sinister attacks on Israel. The Palestinian people deserve better.

Peace can never be achieved so long as terrorist groups like Hamas continue to operate. Israel has been our staunchest ally in the Middle East and a full partner in the global war against radical jihadists—individuals who would destroy our Nation, our children, our values, and the very existence of Western civilization. We must continue to support Israel's

right to defend herself against those who seek to destroy her and continue to support efforts to bring a lasting peace between Israel and her neighbors.

Madam Speaker, I support H. Res. 34 and Israel's right to defend herself from attack.

AFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT
TOWARDS THE STATE OF ISRAEL

HON. TRAVIS W. CHILDERS

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. CHILDERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to affirm that Hamas's continued and violent attacks against Israel have again undermined the potential for peace under already tenuous conditions, harming both Palestinians and Israeli civilians in an unprovoked assault. I join many of my fellow Americans in calling for Hamas to end its attacks, recognize Israel's right to exist, dismantle its terrorist infrastructure, and accept previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians. I was proud to vote last week with a bipartisan majority of my colleagues in support of H. Res. 34, expressing our continued commitment to the welfare and survival of Israel, and recognizing its right to act in self-defense.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE
PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION
ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009. This bill represents a strong bipartisan first step to reform our broken health care system by guaranteeing that millions of uninsured children will have the health care that they need. Its passage will bring a symbolic end to the broken promises of the Bush Administration, which twice chose to deny coverage to 4 million children in desperate need of health care.

Over the past decade the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) has helped reduce the number of uninsured children by one-third and has made significant progress in improving the health of low-income children. H.R. 2 will reauthorize this critical program until 2013, ensuring that 7 million children currently covered by SCHIP continue to receive health coverage. Equally as important, this bill will extend health coverage to an additional 4 million low-income children who are currently uninsured.

The Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 strengthens SCHIP by including incentives for states to develop effective outreach and enroll more eligible children. In addition, the bill improves access to both mental health services and dental health care, and offers states the option to cover targeted low-income pregnant women as a way to provide the essential prenatal care that can help reduce birth defects.

I am particularly grateful that our leadership has chosen to include the provisions of the Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act in this SCHIP reauthorization. This provision will restore the states' option to provide coverage to legal immigrant children who meet all other eligibility criteria, thereby seizing the opportunity to address health disparities in communities of color that historically have had very poor access to health care.

Madam Speaker, I believe this bill takes a giant step forward in honoring our moral imperative to ensure that age, race and income do not determine the health status of our children. I am proud to vote for its passage today, to protect our commitment to our children, and to offer them the promise of a healthier tomorrow.

HONORING MARY ANN RIOJAS

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleagues, Representative JIM COSTA and Representative DEVIN NUNES, to commend and congratulate Mary Ann Riojas upon being selected by ABC's reality television show, "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." Ms. Riojas and her family were surprised by Ty Pennington and his crew on January 8, 2009 at their home in Fresno, CA.

Mary Ann Riojas was born without legs and with only one fully developed arm. As a child, Ms. Riojas was placed into the foster care system, and was faced with an unstable home life. She began to gain her independence when she was introduced into the Easter Seals program and they provided her with her first wheelchair. With this wheelchair she was able to attend Easter Seals Camp Harmon in the Santa Cruz Mountains. At Camp Harmon she learned how to swim and was able to participate in camp activities. The summer camp program provided her an opportunity to meet new people, try new things and continue to gain her independence.

As a young adult, Ms. Riojas decided to stay at home and raise her four children. For a short time she was receiving public assistance to keep her family afloat. In spite of her disabilities, and financial struggle, she was determined to become the first in her family to earn a college degree; she graduated in 2002 from San Joaquin Valley College with an Associate of Arts degree in business administration. To further her independence, she obtained her drivers license, and with the assistance of Easter Seals, she purchased her first fully-equipped, hand-controlled vehicle.

When she was unable to find a job because of her disabilities, Ms. Riojas became an employee of Easter Seals. Her first job was as the office manager at the Child Development Center at Children's Hospital Central California. In 2005, she became the National Ambassador for Easter Seals and travelled all over the country spreading her joy and enthusiasm for life. Ms. Riojas eventually changed jobs, and in 2006, she began working for the Fresno Housing Authority as a counselor. This position has allowed her to assist families in her community that are facing housing and financial problems.

Ms. Riojas does not see herself as disabled, but rather as a mother and an advocate for those with special needs. She is a strong woman who has raised four children; Nichole, Victoria, Angel and Jessie. She continues to inspire others on a daily basis. Being selected for the show is a tribute to Ms. Riojas' dedication to her community and personal commitment to overcome all of life's adversities.

Madam Speaker, we rise today to commend and congratulate Mary Ann Riojas upon being selected for the ABC reality show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Ms. Riojas and her family many years of happiness and success.

TARP REFORM AND
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 15, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 384) to reform the Troubled Assets Relief Program of the Secretary of the Treasury and ensure accountability under such Program, and for other purposes:

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Chair, I would like to draw attention to section 403 of H.R. 384, the "TARP Reform and Accountability Act." It is clearer every day that there is a crisis in the commercial real estate credit markets. Section 403 of H.R. 384 clarifies Treasury's authority to take action to support liquidity in the commercial real estate market.

Right now the \$3.4 trillion commercial mortgage market is frozen. Most lenders have withdrawn from the market and there is no secondary market for commercial mortgages. In 2007, the market provided approximately \$240 billion in financing, which represented nearly 50 percent of all commercial lending. In contrast, the market came to a screeching halt and provided less than \$13 billion in issuance in 2008, despite borrowers' demand. In 2009, tens of billions of commercial real estate loans will come due without any capacity to refinance these performing loans. The result could very well be widespread loan defaults. With the downturn in the U.S. economy now having dramatic effects on the commercial real estate market, Section 403 affirms the Treasury Department's ability to take action to help preserve this important sector of our economy.

With the clarification included in Section 403, the Treasury can move forward in determining how best to address this situation—either through the Term Asset-backed Securities Lending Facility; or by setting aside TARP funds for the creation of a commercial lending facility that would provide the private market with liquidity and allow for the extension of new credit, as well as assist in refinancing existing performing loans.

It is important that we continue to act to address this crisis in a responsible manner that protects the American taxpayer and preserves vital sectors of the United States economy and I urge my colleagues to do so through their support of H.R. 384.

TARP REFORM AND
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 384) to reform the Troubled Assets Relief Program of the Secretary of the Treasury and ensure accountability under such Program, and for other purposes:

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, last fall, I opposed the initial round of financial recovery spending on the grounds that there were too many unknowns about what, and who, our federal dollars were financing. Subsequent events, which revealed that many recipients continued to hold back from making the loans necessary for economic recovery, justified my initial position.

With H.R. 384, Congress is beginning this process to recover and renew America's economic strength with a new administration. Further congressional action is necessary because the efforts to date have been off the mark. This bill is the first step to providing guidance to the new administration, which has already learned many of the lessons from the past administration's failed effort.

I have come to this juncture today with an even greater sense of urgency than even last fall. Thanks to this legislation we can provide hope to American families. This legislation puts stronger oversight mechanisms in place and requires the Treasury Department to reach enforceable and measurable agreements on the use of TARP funds. The legislation also places strong limitations on executive compensation, provides strong foreclosure relief, and includes significant incentives that will aid homebuyers struggling to refinance their loans. For these reasons, H.R. 384 deserves my support.

RECOGNIZING ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO
DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST AT-
TACKS FROM GAZA

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise to support H. Res. 34 recognizing the State of Israel's right to exist in the community of nations and reaffirming America's strong support for Israel.

Paramount among any sovereign state's rights is the right to defend itself. I voted to affirm that right for our good friend, the State of Israel against attacks from Hamas. If the Hamas-led government truly wishes to be a member of the global community, it must acknowledge and abide by all the world's rules including severing all links to terrorism and acknowledging the right of Israel's peaceful existence.

Madam Speaker, the Middle East has been plagued by chronic fighting long enough. I join my colleagues in supporting Israel and in call-

ing on all parties to cease hostilities and focus their efforts on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

TARP REFORM AND
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 384) to reform the Troubled Assets Relief Program of the Secretary of the Treasury and ensure accountability under such Program, and for other purposes:

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chair, the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, passed last October, not only granted the Treasury the authority to use \$350 billion in public funds to prevent a collapse of the financial system, but it also greatly expanded the Federal Reserve's policy toolkit in addressing the crisis through a somewhat obscure, but important, provision of the legislation. The bill authorized the Fed to begin paying interest on the reserves that commercial banks hold with the central bank. This ability has essentially allowed the Fed to establish a "floor" for the federal funds rate, the main lever of its economy-wide monetary policy stance, even while it greatly expands the provision of liquidity to various segments of the financial markets to address the crisis. To this end, the Fed has been increasing the asset side of its balance sheet through a variety of lending facilities and asset purchases. The scope of its lending has also been amplified by frequently invoking emergency powers under the Federal Reserve Act's "unusual and exigent circumstances" clause, which it has used to justify lending to important, non-depository financial institutions.

The Fed has made it clear that it will continue to expand its balance sheet to make sure that credit is available to consumers and small businesses and the integrity of the overall financial system is preserved. In recent months, for instance, the Fed has established new and innovative lending facilities intended to boost the flow of funding to the commercial paper market and key asset-backed security markets, it has committed itself to purchasing billions of mortgage-backed securities in order to keep mortgage rates low for the health of the housing market, and it has continued to play a key role in providing assistance to systemically important financial institutions. These actions on the part of the central bank have, in fact, come very close to replicating the original intent of the TARP program. And these actions, along with the deployment of the initial \$350 billion of TARP funding, have shown signs of being effective—the economy is still in a precarious state, but a systemic, and catastrophic, collapse of our financial and credit markets has been avoided.

My fear is that the second \$350 billion in TARP funding will go far beyond the original mission of preserving overall financial market stability, and instead will be used to fund a heavy-handed, neo-industrial policy. Various industries have already marshaled their lobbyists for a claim on these public dollars. And